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February 7, 1948

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TRADE Winds

ONE SHORT PARAGRAPH from Carl Sandburg's "Abraham Lincoln: The War Years" is going to be built up to a full-length motion picture by RKO. It will be the story of nine-year-old Grace Bedell, who lived in the village of Westfield, N. Y., in 1860. The first time she saw a photograph of the newly-elected President of the United States, she thought he would be better-looking if he grew whiskers, and, what is more, she sat down and wrote him so. Mr. Lincoln gravely replied that it might look like a piece of silly affectation for him to begin raising a beard at this stage of his career. No, answered Grace, it was the right thing for him to do, for he looked much too solemn, and she believed other little girls, like herself, would be scared of him without whiskers.

When Mr. Lincoln's special train carried him to New York, and the inauguration at Washington, he ordered a stop at Westfield, and from the rear platform announced, "I have a correspondent in this place named Grace Bedell, and if she is present I would like to see her." Grace stepped forward, and Mr. Lincoln told her, "You see, I let these whiskers grow for you, Grace. I hope you think I'm better-looking now." Then he kissed her, and Grace cried with joy, and the train moved on, and maybe one or two spectators realized that they had witnessed a wonderful example of true American democracy. . . .

BEFORE HE BECAME PRESIDENT, Lincoln won a big reputation as a corporation counsel. He defended a big railroad in one case that involved hundreds of thousands of dollars. The prosecuting attorney's summation was a masterpiece of logic and eloquence, and took three hours to deliver. Mr. Lincoln amazed the court by limiting his rebuttal to a single sentence: "My opponent's facts are right, but his conclusion is wrong." The jury burst into laughter, retired, and promptly brought in a verdict in Lincoln's favor.

That evening the two attorneys dined together, and Lincoln's disgruntled adversary said, "I'd give a lot to know how you hornswoggled that jury with one short sentence."

"I'll tell you about that," drawled Lincoln. "Last night I had the privilege of downing a few drinks at the tavern with the judge and the gentlemen of the jury, and in the course of the evening I told them the story of the farmer's little boy who came running into the house one night to report, 'Say, Father, the hired hand is out in the barn with the new serving maid, and they're keeping the hay warm.' The farmer answered, 'Son, your facts are right but your conclusion is wrong.' I wouldn't be surprised if the jury remembered that story in the courtroom this morning." . . .

VINCENT STARRETT TELLS a Lincoln anecdote in his delightful new treasure for booklovers, "Books and Bipeds" (Argus). When Clara E. Laughlin was collecting data for her most important work, "The Death of Lincoln," she become so immersed in the subject that she frequently dreamed about it in her sleep. In one dream, Booth grasped her arm and whispered in her ear, "Miss Laughlin, I will tell you a great secret of history. It is something that no one in the world but myself has ever known. I did not kill Abraham Lincoln. *He committed suicide in that box!*" Miss Laughlin awoke in a cold sweat and didn't write another word for a fortnight. . . . Farther on in his book, Vincent Starrett asks the reader, "If you had occasion to send a letter to the following characters of history and legend, what address would you write on the envelope: 1. Sherlock Holmes. 2. Solomon Levi. 3. Dr. Manette. 4. Alice's Right Foot, Esq.? Here are the answers: 1. 221-B Baker Street, London. 2. 149 Salem Street, New Haven. 3. 105 North Tower, Bastille, Paris. 4. Hearthrug, near the Fender, with Alice's love." . . .

BABES IN THE HOLLYWOODS. . . . When Harry Cohn bought "You Can't Take It with You," for Columbia Pictures, his scenario department had so much trouble fashioning an acceptable script that he had to summon the original authors, Moss Hart and George Kaufman. "Just a little polishing is needed, boys," said Cohn. "What do you want to do the job?" The "boys" were well aware of Cohn's predicament, and had come prepared. "Seventy-five thousand," said Kaufman. Cohn gave an excellent imitation of a man having an apoplectic stroke, and buzzed for his Number One Yes Man. "I pay these fellows a quarter of a million for their play in the first place," he told that gentleman, "and now how much extra do you think they want to do a little doctoring on the script?" The Yes Man, caught unawares, suggested, "A hundred and fifty thousand?" Hart and Kaufman got their seventy-five. The Yes Man was fired. . . . Our favorite Mr. Malaprop declared, "I

"How many times must I tell you—the feet go together!"

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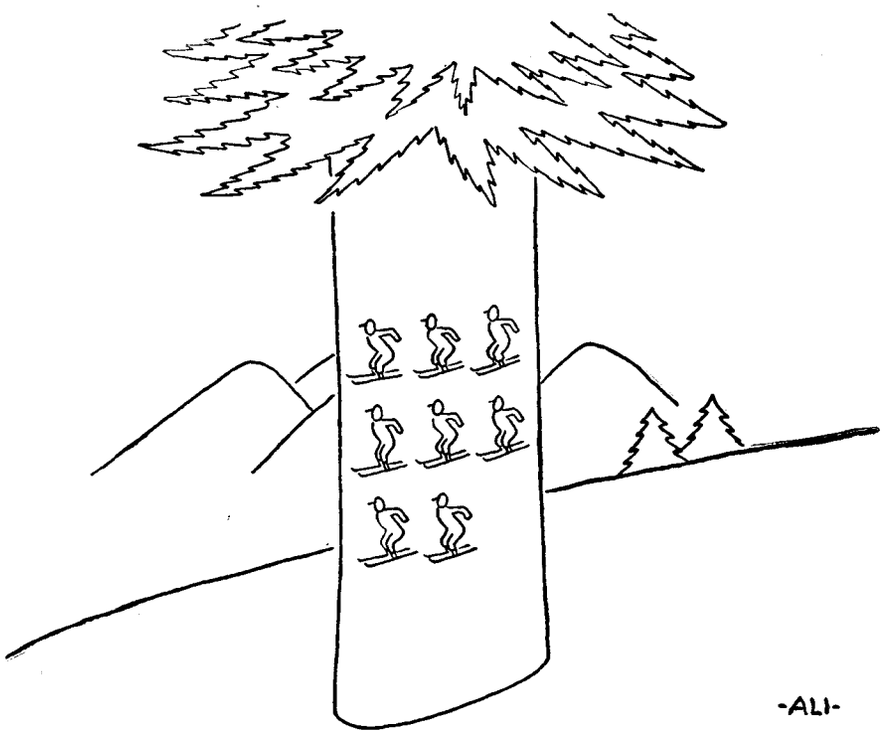

hear they made a good picture out of that novel, 'Black Cirrhosis'!". . . . A producer who is famous for his exaggeration gave a party in honor of his daughter's eighteenth birthday. "How old is she?" asked a guest. "Twenty-three," said the producer. . . . An old sports editor held forth at Chasen's on the late Damon Runyon's extraordinary skill in covering an athletic event, and cited this example: "Yale won a crew victory from Harvard by a sensational last-minute spurt: All of us racked our brains to bat out a lead that wouldn't be the same trite old thing. Here's how Runyon, who typed out his whole piece in fifteen minutes, began his story: 'The Yale crew today arched their backs like eight angry cats and clawed their way to victory'." . . .

NOT MANY MILES FROM the Marshall Field store in Chicago is the unprepossessing suburb of Cicero, where, in the dear, dead days when Prohibition was in its glory, a gentleman named Al Capone reigned supreme. This is a story of a dinner dance to which he played host, and to which his toughest minions flocked in their best bibs, tuckers, and tommy guns. One extremely pretty girl, making her debut in this select society, was the cynosure of all eyes, as she expected to be, but, as the evening wore on, she grew more and more restive. The host, Mr. Capone himself, had not asked her to dance with him.

"He's danced four times with that frump with all the peroxide curls and purple beads," she complained to her escort. "He hasn't even looked at me. You're a big-shot—or so you tell me. Do something about it!"

Her hard-pressed escort had a sudden inspiration. "If you knew what it meant, Capone dancing with that jane so often," he told her, "you wouldn't talk like that. He's putting the finger on her! She must know too much. Capone's signaling the boys to give her a ride. She's as good as gone right now!" The girl paled, shuddered with excitement, and whispered, "Gee, honey, how was I to know?"

The young Machiavelli was so pleased with his stratagem, he couldn't resist telling it to Al Capone, who promptly decided the joke was too good to cut short. He walked over to the girl, calmly took her away from the man to whom she was talking, and said loudly, "This dance is with me."

For four dances in succession, he whirled her around the floor, at the end of which time the young lady was so frightened she was uttering incoherent sounds, and her eyes were popping from her head. Capone appeared more and more interested.

On the way home, much, much later, the girl's escort let her in on his whimsical little joke.

If you're looking for a story with a happy ending, this one has it, I suppose. The girl achieved some small measure of revenge within twenty-four hours. Her boy friend was found dead in an alley, his body sprayed with a dozen machine-gun slugs. She was looking sadly at his picture, and wondering what to wear to the funeral, when a messenger arrived with four dozen long-stemmed American Beauties. The enclosed card read, "Mr. Capone expects you to have dinner with him this evening."

BENNETT CERF.

What would you do if you had accidentally killed your mistress? Would you tell the woman you later married?

Simon did, and lived to regret it. The editor of "Gist", the little magazine with the big circulation, he was outwardly successful, apparently happy, caught in the chains of luxury. Yet part of his past haunted him. When he shared his terrible secret with his wife, his doubts—and hers—began, and they both learned that

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Something of My Life

THOMAS WOLFE

Thomas Wolfe

— *Drawn from life by Georges Schreiber.*

"The critics say I write too much. . . ."

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Under the title "The Story of a Novel," Thomas Wolfe wrote three articles for* SRL *in December, 1935, telling the story behind "Of Time and the River." About that time, Wolfe also wrote directly about himself for "Portraits and Self-Portraits"—a book of line drawings of literary figures by Georges Schreiber accompanied by short autobiographical sketches.* The Saturday Review *has gained access to the original Wolfe manuscript turned in for that book. Actually, more than half the material was cut out by Maxwell Perkins, Wolfe's editor, for reasons of space. By special arrangement with Mr. Schreiber,* The Saturday Review *publishes herewith the complete manuscript, containing approximately* 1,200 *words of autobiographical material that has never before appeared in print. For a sample of Mr. Perkins's editing, the reader is referred to the illustration on the opposite page.*

I SUPPOSE the biographical facts about birth, home-town, colleges and so on, are available to the editors of this book, so I shall not bother to give them here. Since almost all the knowledge the world has of me, concerns me as a writer, perhaps it will be better if I try to tell something of the life.

I am thirty-five years old, and although I have written more millions of words than I should like to count—how many I don't know, but perhaps as many as anyone else my age now writing—I have published not more than a tenth of them. Nevertheless, the critics say I write too much—and I don't say that they are wrong. Although I suppose the desire to be a writer has been buried in me for a long time—certainly the itch for it has been there, because I began to scribble when I was not more than fourteen years old, I never dared admit to myself that I might seriously proclaim my intentions until I was about twenty-six.

Before that, I had written a few plays and although I had hoped they might find a producer, I don't think that even then, I had sufficient confidence in my abilities to announce definitely to my family that I actually intended to be a playwright and to hope to earn my living that way. I didn't succeed, anyway. And it was not until the twenty-sixth year that I began to write a book, which occupied me for the next two or three years. During this time I was employed at the Washington Square college of the New York University as an instructor in English. I don't think that even then did I concretely and reasonably assure myself that I had found my life's direction in the work that I intended to do from that time on. I certainly did dream of finding a publisher and a public for the book, but it was really a kind of dream—a kind of intoxicating illusion which sustained me during the period of creation. I suppose I can say honestly that I wrote the book because I had to write it and after it was written and I saw the tremendous bulk of it in the cold grey light of sober actuality, I had the most serious misgivings and wondered what on earth had ever possessed me to make me spend two or three years of my life in creating such a huge leviathan or what moment of mad unreason had deluded me into thinking that I could possibly find a publisher and readers for it. My own dejected doubt was speedily confirmed by the first publisher who read the manuscript, who sent it back very speedily, with a very brief note to the effect that it was too long, too autobiographical, too amateurish and too like other books which he had published and lost money on, for him to risk a chance. This seemed to summarize and confirm my own most depressed feelings, now that the book was written and in this frame of mind I went to Europe and almost forgot about the book.

Within six months, however, another publisher had read the manuscript and accepted it. I returned to America, taught at the University and worked on the revision of the book which was published in October, 1929 a few weeks after my twenty-ninth birthday.

SO FAR as "early struggles" are concerned, my experience has been a fortunate one. The first book I ever wrote, and a very long one, too, was accepted and published by one of the first publishers who read it, and I understand that this is an extraordinary occurrence. I have had my

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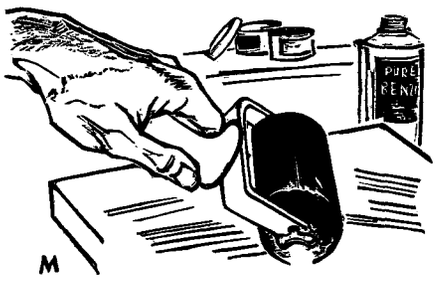
struggles, however, and pretty desperate ones too, but most of them, so far as writing is concerned, have been of my own making. I have to struggle all the time against indolence—perhaps it would be more accurate to say against an insatiable and constantly growing interest in the life around me, my desire to get out and explore it with an encyclopedic thoroughness, my desire to travel and make voyages and see places, things, and people I have never known. I like companionship, food and drink, going to baseball games, and having a good time. I must also struggle constantly against self-doubt—lack of confidence in what I do and the many difficulties I encounter in doing it. My knowledge of the craft and technique of my profession is still very imperfect. I believe and hope that I learn something about it and about my own capacity as a writer all the time, but I learn very slowly and at the cost of almost infinite error, waste, and confusion. I do much too much of everything; I write millions of words in the course of shaping out and defining a volume of a few hundred thousand. It seems to be an element of my creative faculty that it has to realize itself through the process of torrential production, and although I hope to be able to control and guide this force as I go on, so that I will be able to achieve my work with more and more clearness and precision and economy, without such a waste of effort, time, and material, I think that the way I work will always remain in its essence pretty much as I have tried to describe it and that it will have to come out of me in this way.

I come from a class and section of American life which regarded writing—the profession of a writer—as something very mysterious and romantic and very remote from its own life and the world of its own knowledge and experience. For this reason, as I have said, it was twenty-six years or more before I even dared to admit concretely that I might become a writer and I was almost thirty before my own admission was concretely affirmed by publication. For this reason, perhaps, and for others—which I tried to mention—a kind of tremendous inertia in me and the tendency of human kind to put off and evade for as long as possible the thing it knows it has to do, the work it cannot avoid and without which its life is nothing—and a strong sense of direction and often a very confused sense of purpose. For all these reasons my development, I think, has been a slow one. And yet it has sometimes seemed to me that

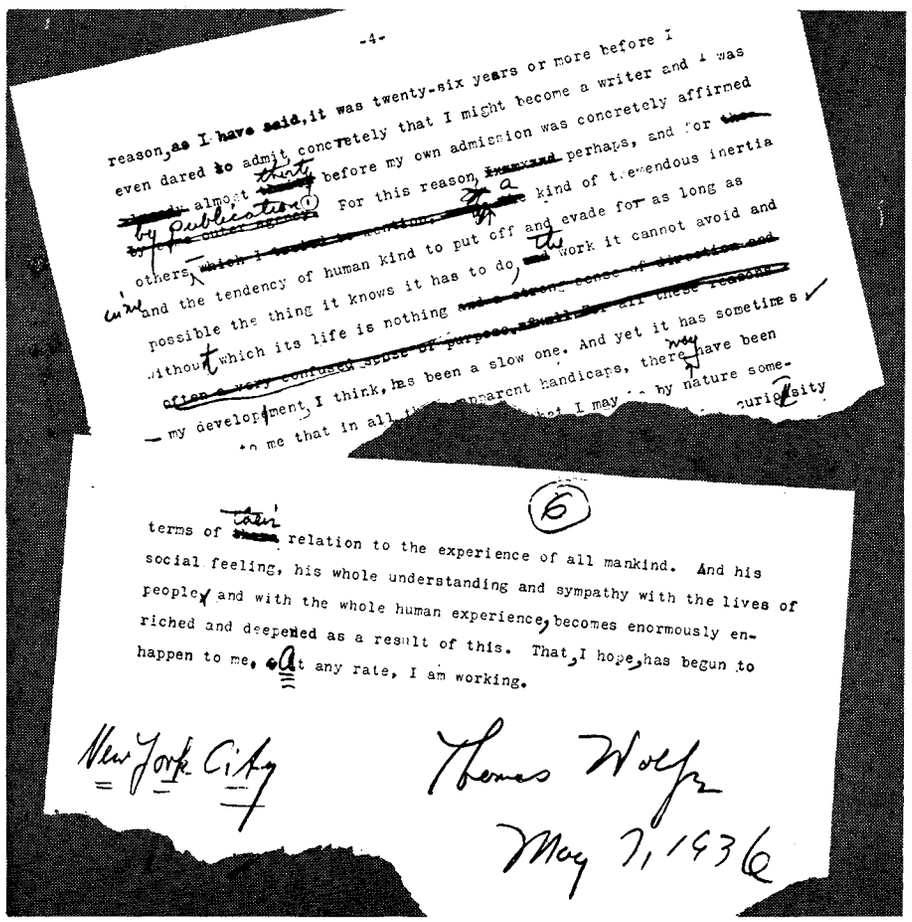


in all these apparent handicaps, there may have been certain advantages, too. The belief that I may be by nature somewhat indolent and the knowledge that I may allow a ravenous curiosity for life and new experience to come between the work I ought to be doing—and the fact that as hard and grim as work itself may be, not only the intensity of effort and concentration required, but the period of spiritual imprisonment that work necessitates—the very knowledge that once a piece of work has been begun, a man's whole life must be absorbed and obsessed by it day and night until he finishes it—all of these things, together with a certain goad of conscience, have driven me to face the fact of work, to try to meet it squarely and to do it as hard as I can once I am started on it. It has been said of much that I have written thus far that it was autobiographical. I cannot answer such a very debatable and complicated word in the short space that is allotted here and I shall not attempt to. I can only say that it seems to me that every creative act is in one way or another—autobiographical.

* * *

THE kind of naked directness with which the young man writing his first book is likely to make use of his material, but as I have said, much of the trouble and misunderstanding may have come from the fact that I have not yet succeeded in being autobiographical enough, instead of the fact that I was, as many people say, too autobiographical. At any rate, as I go on, my tendency I believe is to make use of the materials of living experience with an ever increasing freedom of the inventiveness and the plastic powers of the imagination.

As far as the experience of work itself is concerned, I have found that so far from isolating one from contacts with reality and a living experience with the world around one, it enhances and enriches one's perceptions enormously. In fact, it seems to me that the core of an artist's life is his work, and his deepest knowledge, his greatest power, his profoundest social feelings come through the work he does as a great current of electricity pulses and surges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reason, as I have said, it was twenty-six years or more before I even dared to admit concretely that I might become a writer and I was almost thirty before my own admission was concretely affirmed by publication. For this reason, perhaps, and for others, and the tendency of human kind to put off and evade for as long as possible the thing it knows it has to do, the work it cannot avoid and without which its life is nothing — my development, I think, has been a slow one. And yet it has sometimes

6

terms of later relation to the experience of all mankind. And his social feeling, his whole understanding and sympathy with the lives of people, and with the whole human experience, becomes enormously enriched and deepened as a result of this. That, I hope, has begun to happen to me. At any rate, I am working.

New York City

Thomas Wolfe

May 7, 1936

A working example of the Maxwell Perkins-Thomas Wolfe editor-author relationship.

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through a dynamo. I suppose it is true that a man at twenty is likely to have an egocentric picture of the universe, is concerned with life very largely as it reflects and acts upon his own personality. And I suppose also that this concentration on his own immediate experience and interest is likely to show itself in his earlier work. But so far as my own experience is concerned, I believe that as one grows older, he becomes a great deal more interested in the life around him in terms of itself. His interests, and the adventures and experiences of his own personality, become valuable to him more in terms of their relation to the experience of all mankind. And his social feeling, his whole understanding and sympathy with the lives of people and with the whole human experience, becomes enormously enriched and deepened as a result of this. That, I hope, has begun to happen to me. At any rate, I am working.

Thomas Wolfe as Writer and Man

THOMAS WOLFE. By Herbert J. Muller. New York: New Directions. 1947. 196 pp. $2.

Reviewed by
HENRY MORTON ROBINSON

ANY CREATIVE writer will tell you that one of the cruelest bars to composition is the dread that his work will be pilloried by incompetent critics. Conversely, the knowledge that his book will be assessed by fair and penetrating criticism, is one of the disciplines that keeps a writer keen. When Lionel Trilling exercises his critical gifts on E. M. Forster, or when, as in the present case, Herbert J. Muller turns in a flawless performance on Thomas Wolfe—every creative writer, no matter how obscure, turns again to his own task with renewed vigor and confidence. "I will be dealt with," he tells himself, "strictly on my merits."

Thomas Wolfe would be grateful, I believe, for the even-handed criticism dealt out to him by Mr. Muller in the most recent addition to the New Directions series "The Makers of Modern Literature." In this compact essay, Mr. Muller not only dissects Wolfe as a writer and analyzes him as a man, but manages by some marvelous act of critical re-creation to put him together again as the personification of the Myth in, and for, our time. Myth, not legend, mind you. The distinction is crucial. As Mr. Muller says, "The legend of Thomas Wolfe is depressingly familiar," and then proceeds to summarize it in a skilful paragraph or two. But it is as the Myth of our age—"the large controlling image . . . which gives meaning to the facts of ordinary life," that Mr. Muller would have us understand his man.

Presented with this "large controlling image" (the figure, as Mr. Muller points out, is Mark Schorer's) we see Thomas Wolfe not merely as a writer of superabundant power, endowed with a passionate sensory equipment, seldom equaled in literature—but more particularly as the Mythmaker for our confused and whirling society. Mr. Muller conceives Wolfe in terms of Artist and Hero—or more exactly, the Artist *as* Hero—then proceeds to weave a taut critical fabric, containing just enough biography to keep the book at a human stretch. It is really quite an exhibition of interpretive writing; a model, I feel, of what such writing should be.

Sympathetically but without gush, Mr. Muller tells of Wolfe's lifelong struggle with creative and personal problems. Underneath the Byronic posturings, the revulsions, and the neurotic agonies of the man, we see the artist emerging surely and painfully in his principal male characters. The too-yeasty Eugene Gant of "Look Homeward, Angel" gradually gives place to the still-fermenting but more firmly controlled figure of George Webber of "The Web and the Rock." A certain objectivity in symbolism has been gained. The "rock" is the promethean cliff of Manhattan; the web is the skein of corruption and greed spun on that fabulous isle. But Webber is still Wolfe, even though he has matured, *pari passu*, with his creator. We realize that Wolfe is on a pilgrimage to discover first his own soul, then the soul of America, and that his teeming novels are at bottom a turbulent record of his quest—a "Pilgrim's Progress" across the melancholy terrain of our own day.

Wherever true creative growth is to be noted in this progress, Mr. Muller notes it. But when Ganty rhetoric or cheap thimble-rigging are being palmed off on the reader, Mr. Muller strikes at them with his critical staff. His book is an eloquent defense of Wolfe, but there are passages in which he is a remorseless prosecutor, too. The chapter entitled "Transition" seems to me to be one of the most valuable pro-and-con discussions of Wolfe that I have ever read.

Part of the Wolfe legend runs that Tom Wolfe was written out when he died; that he had mined all the best material from the galleries of his suffering soul; that he was already repeating himself, and that he would have sunk still deeper into the slough of revulsion and bitterness from which he originally sprung. Mr. Muller refutes this in some measure by pointing out that in "You Can't Go Home Again" Wolfe had achieved a sober, hard-won stoicism, and that the book ends on a spiritual up-beat. "I believe we are lost here in America, but I believe we shall be found," is Wolfe's final position. Whether Tom Wolfe would have developed new material or gained a real objectivity external to himself,—these are questions that Mr. Muller quite wisely does not attempt to answer. It really doesn't matter. On the basis of evidence Thomas Wolfe can be admitted to the company of the elect. And that his life work "was as close as we can expect to come to an American epic," cannot be doubted after closing Mr. Muller's comprehensive and admirable book.

—*Press Association.*

Thomas Wolfe [taken in Berlin, 1935]: "I believe we are lost here in America, but I believe we shall be found."

Henry Morton Robinson is the author of "The Great Snow" and co-author with Joseph Campbell of "A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake."

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Fiction. *There are few novels in which the past and a story are so well blended that one may study accurate history from the first and enjoy the second. In Herbert Gorman's "The Cry of Dolores," reviewed this week, the reader has an opportunity of discovering painlessly the origin of Mexican freedom and the story of that remarkable priest, Hidalgo, who helped to create it. From the other side of the world, Angela Thirkell presents one of her amusing comedies of manners and reveals with what little grace the upper set in Barsetshire is enduring England's quiet social revolution. Apart from speculation on this week's offerings, it will be interesting to see what effect Alfred S. Kinsey's report on the behavior or misbehavior of the American male will have on the future of the American novel. Here is authentic evidence of sexual behavior that does not have to be dug out of the case histories of psychiatrists.*

Freedom Dawns Over Mexico

THE CRY OF DOLORES. By Herbert Gorman. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1948. 443 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by HERSCHEL BRICKELL

AMID the current spate of overstuffed, overwritten historical novels, the majority of which are as formula-ridden as the romances of chivalry which Cervantes once smiled out of existence, Mr. Gorman's stirring story of the opening chapter of the war for Mexican independence stands out like a lighthouse, and is by any criterion a superior piece of fiction.

This is his second venture into Mexican territory, the first having been another accomplished novel, "The Wine of San Lorenzo," widely and deservedly praised. The end of the present book promises a sequel, to deal with Chapter Two of the struggle for independence, in which the second priest-marytr of the conflict, Morelos, played the leading part. With a sure mastery of his background, and his other distinguished gifts for the making of intelligent fiction, one may anticipate with pleasure Mr. Gorman's further exploration of an inexhaustibly rich period.

"The Cry of Dolores" is not merely a graphic and accurate presentation of the priest Hidalgo's contribution to the cause of Mexican freedom, although this it certainly is. It is also an authentic piece of fiction, in which sympathetically and successfully drawn characters take their places with figures from history, one set as well done as the other, and in which simple, eternal human values are never missing from its pages.

The outline of the story is the biography of an Indian woman, Marie de la Luz Zinzicha, called Luz, and of her son, Ciriaco, who is the result of an assault upon the girl by a drunken Spanish officer near her Patzcuaro village. Luz is in love with Bartolomé El Arponero (The Harpooner), who has plied the Pacific in search of whales, and he with her. After she has been attacked, she flees to hide her shame and to avoid the possible vengeance of Bartolomé.

Mr. Gorman tells the tale from Luz's point of view until Ciriaco moves to the center of the stage, and there is genuine fascination in his portrayal of the village Indian's growing awareness of the complexities of the life about her, with the social and economic distinctions between the gachupines (Spaniards), criollos, Indians, mestizos, zambos, etc. Her wanderings take her through many adventures and bring her at last to the village of Dolores, where she has been told to seek the assistance of the priest Hidalgo. Her child is born in the priest's house, and thus she moves into the vortex of the revolution.

With the help of the priest, who is wholly on the side of the oppressed Indians, Luz becomes a successful weaver, and in time the housekeeper of Hidalgo, who has taught the little Ciriaco to read, write, and figure. Ciriaco, working in the pottery factory which is another enterprise of Hidalgo's designed to help the Indians, falls in love with the sandalmaker's daughter, Rosalia, and their adolescent courtship, done with great tenderness, sympathy, and understanding, is in tone with the dignity of the whole novel, a dignity that is exactly right for a story of two dignified peoples, the Indians and the Spaniards.

Luz's story ends when she is killed by Spaniards as they raid Hidalgo's house, and with her dies the hunchback-revolutionary Ciriaco, who has befriended Luz during her wanderings and for whom she has named her child. Bartolomé kills the Spanish of-

THE AUTHOR: Despite congenital cataracts on both eyes, Herbert Sherman Gorman became a gluttonous reader at eight, a writer soon after, and still spends his waking hours preoccupied with the written word. The words he is currently manipulating will end the Mexican trilogy of which the book here reviewed—his twentieth—forms the second part. For nine years, with the exception of summer research trips to Mexico—"my substitute for France"—, his scene of operations has been an up-state New York hamlet, Hughsonville. This is a war-imposed makeshift for a French village home where he and his wife and one daughter, Pat, now fifteen, had settled during the mid-Thirties. He comes naturally by an irresistible Old World tug through his half-Gallic mother, and all-Irish paternal blood. He was ushered in with the new year of 1893 at Springfield, Mass. Early forays into cobbling, factory work, bank clerking, and acting antedated a stretch of newspaper reporting and editing from 1915 to 1928, first in Springfield, then in New York. But publication of some teen-age poetry had already initiated a literary career that was to embrace biographies, novels, essays, and book reviewing as well. In the New York of the Twenties, he knew such literary titans as Dos Passos, Tom Wolfe, Elinor Wylie *et al.*, but eschewed their expatriate counterparts in France, where he had but one intimate among the famed—James Joyce. His first novel, "Gold by Gold" (1925), he calls "a slavish imitation of some of Joyce's fancier inventions. I got over that though." His definitive life of Joyce, now being reprinted as a textbook, and a biography of Mary Queen of Scots he considers his best productions. He's mulling over a novel of pre-war France—and dreaming of "home." He once had two secret passions: to be a good chef and to meet Myrna Loy. He has accomplished neither and has lost interest in the latter.—E.P.H.

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ficer, using his harpoon, which never leaves him, and this incident is the only possible touch of melodrama in the whole novel. At worst, however, it is a minor flaw, and one is no more inclined to quarrel with it than with Mr. Gorman's penchant for the unusual word, which is easily forgiven in the light of a varied and agreeable style.

The novel has been described as "a story of love and war," which in essence it is. But it is also history brought to life, carefully and honestly, as well as vividly. Mr. Gorman's method might be described as "realistic" in that it blinks at nothing that can and does happen to people; but it suffers none of the limitations of any school, and one of its very refreshing qualities is the fundamental decency of the handling of all kinds of situations, as well as the presence in its pages of a surprisingly—in this day of novels filled with morbid and abnormal characters — large number of good people, not romanticized, not prettified, but thoughtfully and sympathetically presented.

Mr. Gorman is particularly successful with his women, as he was obliged to be with Luz if his novel was to be artistically successful, since she is the protagonist; but he also does very well by a variety of subordinate female characters, and has created in Rosalia one of the most credible and charming heroines to appear in a novel in a long time.

The widely discussed death of our official Good Neighbor Policy, after its war-time heyday, has by no means brought to an end the interest of North American writers in the affairs of our sister republics. Of all these Mexico has the least reason to complain of neglect when no more than a matter of weeks separates the appearance of two such really outstanding books as Ralph Roeder's magnificently definitive study of Juarez and his times, and the novel here considered.

Mr. Gorman has been a consistent producer of a variety of useful books of literary distinction for a full generation, including a number of admirable historical novels, distinguished by careful and thorough research as well as a craftsmanship that has steadily improved and matured. "The Cry of Dolores" should add definitely to his critical standing and should assuredly give lasting pleasure to novel readers who are worn out with unripe youthful experiments, clinical reports, and Hollywood-bound hokum. This is a novel, in short, whose merits are solid enough to get one's teeth into, as story, as character-portrayal, as an interpretation of a complex social scene, and as history translated into the verisimilitude of life.

Mrs. Thirkell's Barsetshire

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. By Angela Thirkell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1948. 405 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

FOR A LONG time I have been at home in the original Barsetshire of Anthony Trollope, but never, until I opened "Private Enterprise," had I ventured into Angela Thirkell's appropriated county of the same name. One cannot judge it fairly on the basis of a single visit, so the present report is that of a tourist, or tripper, only. It is strange to find oneself in a region where one knows so many landmarks, but where one discovers them in surprising locations. The traveler who has learned to believe in the accuracy of Trollope's cartographer will find it hard to be patient with Mrs. Thirkell's. After all, as every good Barsetshire conservative will agree, you can't go shoving such well-known places as Framley, Chaldicotes, and Hogglestock all over the map, just to suit some new-fangled author's whim. From what one hears, however, one must conclude that there is a stout and radical band of Thirkellians dedicated to the proposition that the true gospel of Barsetshire is the gospel according to Thirkell. If I dared, I should pity them aloud; but the timid must tread cautiously.

Not that there are any radicals in today's Barsetshire. On the contrary, Mrs. Thirkell's characters, at least in "Private Enterprise," are made of the same stuff as were Trollope's sturdiest reactionaries. They would turn back the clock a few years, if they could, and then make time stand still.

Their story, such as it is, plays itself out within the setting of what they like to call the Foul New World: an England, ruled by Labor, in which the nuisances of peace seem less endurable than the horrors of war. The middle classes are being taxed out of existence, novel forms of dishonesty

are rampant in the land, and even the weather (doubtless due to the governing They) is impossible. People starved for luxuries and even necessities must watch them "flowing in a steady stream to foreigners: clothes, hand-bags, shoes, whisky, gin, tweeds, silks, a thousand other things." Women's nerves are at the breaking point, but no one can afford to break. Public places are filled with "gawks, oafs, lumps, foreigners," whose faces contrast unpleasantly with those of the "English women of breeding" who lend their presence to Barchester's Red Cross Exhibition. Bored and cross, people wonder "what use it had been to stand alone against the Powers of Darkness if the reward was to be increasing discomfort and a vast army of half-baked bureaucrats stifling all freedom and ease." "The Little Man" is "having his day and trampling all to his mean level."

Conditions in a place like Barchester, where tradesmen know their customers, are somewhat less trying than in the big cities; and in such an establishment as the Bridge Inn the rules are ignored completely. "'Rations?' said Mrs. Hubback. 'They don't bother us, miss, and we don't bother them. I'm not going to eat that nasty marge at my time of life, nor that nasty bacon neither, nor them allocation eggs as they call them. Old-age-pension eggs, I call 'em. We manage all right, miss. You see, we all know each other'." But even in Barsetshire there is enough grumbling to be done to keep Mrs. Thirkell's characters happily occupied.

Along with the grumbling, and necessary dodges of daily living, go a good deal of marital affection, a few examples of amusing eccentricity, a little jealousy, and some blossoms of love—both young and middle-aged. The story of Colin Keith's pursuit of pretty Mrs. Arbuthnot claims our interest at first, only to become lost in the divaricative course of the general narrative. Mrs. Thirkell rambles over the countryside from household to household, from social gathering to social gathering, chatting pleasantly about her characters, while they chat endlessly amongst themselves; and too often one of them sounds very much like another, without regard even to the natural frontiers of sex, for her men are frequently as arch in conversation as her women. The connubial bliss of her married couples is underscored, almost annoyingly, by a characteristic and repetitive use of the possessive pronoun. Noel Merton, for example, is forever thinking of "his Lydia," while Lydia thinks of

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"her Noel." One begins to long for plain names, without the tags of ownership.

But Mrs. Thirkell is a mistress of small talk, an amusing reporter of the domestic scene, and a practised manipulator of trivialities; her touch is light, her manner easy, and her literary aim not high. She does, I imagine, pretty much what she sets out to do, and we cannot reasonably insist that she should have set out to do anything else. One may or may not choose to drink the lightest of ladies' port, but one should not damn it for being what it was meant to be. Of course, Mrs. Thirkell has men in her admiring audience, yet, if she herself did not think of it as largely composed of members of her own sex, she would hardly have written on page 274: "If any reader has gradually received the impression that the mild events hitherto chronicled happened during the winter, she is not to be blamed."

I am sure that "Private Enterprise," beneath its surface froth, contains much truth regarding the lives and thoughts of many Englishmen who now find themselves under a socialistic government. What I miss is a good story, for I have been used to meeting up with good stories whenever I journeyed into Barsetshire. In view of Mrs. Thirkell's reputation, I can only assume that she has told far better tales than this one.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 242

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 242 will be found in the next issue.

WC GQBMJ WC W CBNLV TC

ANYBTOWBML ZV JWDDGH

KTJLC, BSMV HTYY LDWH

QDGK TB JWDDGH

AGJAYNCTGJC.—UGSJ

CBNWDB KTYY.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 241

Genius does what it must, and Talent does what it can.
OWEN MEREDITH.

A Man and His Loves

"Vivian Connell needs to be reminded that 'A rose is a rose is a rose,' and not a mouth."

THE GOLDEN SLEEP. By Vivian Connell. New York: The Dial Press. 1948. 314 pp. $3.

Reviewed by HARRY BULL

ALTHOUGH the hero inside betrays an astonishing resemblance to the man on the jacket, "The Golden Sleep" is no run-of-the-press autobiographical novel. Both Calvin Spring and Vivian Connell are dark, handsome Irishmen, still preserving around forty the tenacious vitality that made them long-distance runners in their youth. As much at ease in a waterfront pub as on the milking stool, in the cafes of Majorca as in the Ritz of Belgrave Square, they boast of their ability to "drive a book to the end without flagging," and take for granted the importance of their ultimate contribution to the sum of human knowledge.

But with all this in common, Mr. Connell still falls far short of understanding Mr. Spring.

For his hero does not seem to me the strong, D. H. Laurentian male that he and his equally humorless creator believe him to be, but is instead a spoiled boy, full of charm and adolescent dreams, nourished on gestures and escapes, forever in search of mother love from the partners of his romantic affairs. It is said to be Spring's particular gift as a novelist that he understands women, and because Mr. Connell does have a gift for unraveling hidden feminine motivations, he has passed it on to his hero and surrounded him with women who have more reality than most of their sisters in current fiction.

In unfolding the characters of the four most important women who are in love with him, the author shows unusual gifts. He knows how to make the reader share the tension of his characters. He has poetry, an acute perception of the hostility half hidden in many conventional situations, and a passionate preference for truth above salability. These qualities make "The Golden Sleep" a more engrossing and stimulating tale than most of the latest fiction. And what is unintentionally revealed of a sensitive artist's very muddled picture of his own conflicts is still more interesting.

Against a lyric background of southern English country before the war, and contrasted with a hideously bourgeois English city, Mr. Connell sets his story of frustrated loves with considerable skill. Unfortunately this has not been enough for him, and he confuses the action with oriental symbolism on the Sax Rohmer level and a series of coincidences that he cannot convince the reader are the results of fatalism. These contrived and mystifying elements of his plot are as much a drawback to a work of art as are his repetitious figures of speech. A half dozen times the mouth of one woman or another is compared to a rose; once a whole face is a rose; and once a mind; the country retreat is Rosehaven. Admittedly an admirer of "A Farewell to Arms," and more influenced by its atmospheric description of rain than by Somerset Maugham's, Mr. Connell evidently still needs to be reminded that the self-proclaimed literary mistress of Ernest Hemingway wrote "A rose is a rose is a rose," and not a mouth, and that, long before, a greater poet found a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

If Mr. Connell has no difficulty in "driving" a book to conclusion, he evidently has plenty in editing it. Apart from his failure to prune the roses, there are too many faces and bodies "emptied of the person within for another being to come in and fill the void," too much irrelevant Irish prejudice against the English, and misplaced bitterness against Osbert Sitwell and André Gide. The comments on music would be better cut, or a little study given to Proust's development of the Vinteuil theme so that the reader might "hear" the theme dedicated to Calvin Spring as he could Vinteuil's music at the Verdurins's. In short, there are too many undisciplined threads of the author's

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personality tangling with the main fibre.

In many writers the mellowing of the years would correct these faults; but in spite of a professed search for quiet in which to supersede the production of mere romances with a major work on civilization, Calvin Spring, speaking for Vivian Connell, shows few signs of the patience and humility that are needed to achieve a smoother, full-bodied maturity.

Parfit Gentil Knight

WITHIN THE HOLLOW CROWN. By Margaret Campbell Barnes. Philadelphia: Macrae-Smith Co. 1947. 359 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by
CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN

IN THIS book Mrs. Barnes has been pleased to take what she considers a searching look at England's second Richard. Her vision is rose-colored to excess. Her insistence on purity of motive not only pictures Richard a simpleton but throws history out of balance. Surely such a noble, sweet, idealistic Plantagenet would have held England forever and claimed Bolingbroke as his dearest and most loyal coz. Alas, for all Mrs. Barnes's efforts this was not so.

Here is neither a Bordeaux fop nor Shakespeare's fallible and ambitious king. This young "Dickon," we are led to believe, simply loved Robert de Vere as a convivial chum. His gentle wife, Anne, was all in all to him, the people of England his deepest concern, and a civilized world his eternal hope. Those constant and expensive wars were merely the preludes to peace. In favor of lower taxes and the common man, it seemed only sane for Richard to appropriate dead John of Gaunt's properties in order to support the fight. After all, Bolingbroke was banished and, in this Whitman Sampler version, he would be repaid on his return.

These were surely dark, desperate, tremendously heightened days. The premium was never quite so cheap on life, nor were politics quite so amoral. Mrs. Barnes lays assiduous stress on period structure, doing the Wat Tyler Rebellion, the Merciless Parliament, and the plague-induced death of Anne vividly. It is only a pity that she consistently denies the darkness and that there is not the slightest language in her telling.

Chaucer and Dick Whittington as well as a brace of Lancasters stalk these pages. We are reminded of characters and facts we like to believe

(*Continued on page* 24)

The War.

To the average American who took no part in it our Pacific war was confusing and unreal. Large-scale naval operations were new to us, and the fighting was in unknown territory, symbolized for most of us by an heroic group of Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima—a group of men on an island somewhere vaguely in the Pacific. . . . Fletcher Pratt has long been our antidote against the confusions of the Eastern war. From his early articles in Harper's, *which etched in unusual clarity the complex naval actions among the islands, to his latest book, reviewed below, Pratt has been able to bring understanding and a feel of reality to the battles of the East. Our reviewer has compared his book to Hough's "The Island War." We would recommend to our readers that they supplement these with the recent "Admiral Halsey's Story."*

Kwajalein, Saipan, Guam, Iwo Jima...

THE MARINES' WAR. By Fletcher Pratt. New York: William Sloane Assoc. 1948. 456 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by WALTER MILLIS

THE Marines' war was, of course, that remarkable series of bloody and bitter amphibious campaigns which carried the American advance from Guadalcanal and Tarawa across the great reaches of the central Pacific to the terrible beaches of Iwo Jima and the jagged fastnesses of Okinawa. It left the names of Kwajalein and Eniwetok, of Bougainville and Cape Gloucester, of Saipan, Guam, and Peleliu and many more imperishably engraved upon American and Marine Corps history; and Fletcher Pratt has here retold the whole story, compactly but in detail and with considerable narrative skill and pace. The Marines opened the official sources to him but without saddling him with official responsibility. He stresses the freedom they gave him—they were too proud of the job as a whole to be afraid of criticism—but beyond a few rather mild strictures on certain tactical points it cannot be said that he has made any very searching or sensational critique.

Since the book follows so closely over the ground already traversed by Frank O. Hough's excellent "The Island War," comparison is almost inevitable. Pratt, a civilian student of military and naval affairs, takes a more detached, professionally "expert" view and tends to see things more from the level of grand strategy and planning. Hough, who served as a Marine in the Pacific, was more interested in the human and tactical details of the innumerable little beach and jungle actions out of which the whole was made; he had a more vivid feeling for the stink and sweat and pain of the business, and conveyed a more authentic sense of the spirit, character, and reason for being of the United States Marines—those tough specialists in the difficult techniques of amphibious warfare against defended beaches.

Pratt evidently had a more extended access to the Japanese records captured at the time or recovered after the war, and perhaps his most useful addition to the history is his filling in of the Japanese side. His analysis of the Japanese dispositions and staff planning clarifies much about the enemy's strategy in the Solomons, which seemed so incomprehensible at the time. He completes the grim, heroic story of Tarawa with an account of "Yogaki," the "Waylaying Attack" prepared to meet just this American move, and of why it never materialized. It did not for several reasons, an important one being an American carrier strike on Rabaul, which is 1,500 miles away from Tarawa but directly affected the outcome on the latter's bloody beaches.

This illustrates Pratt's second contribution. The Marines' war across their lethal islands is related not only to the arguments in Tokio and the plans of the Japanese local commanders; it is related also to the higher American staff planning and to the far-flung naval actions which, some-

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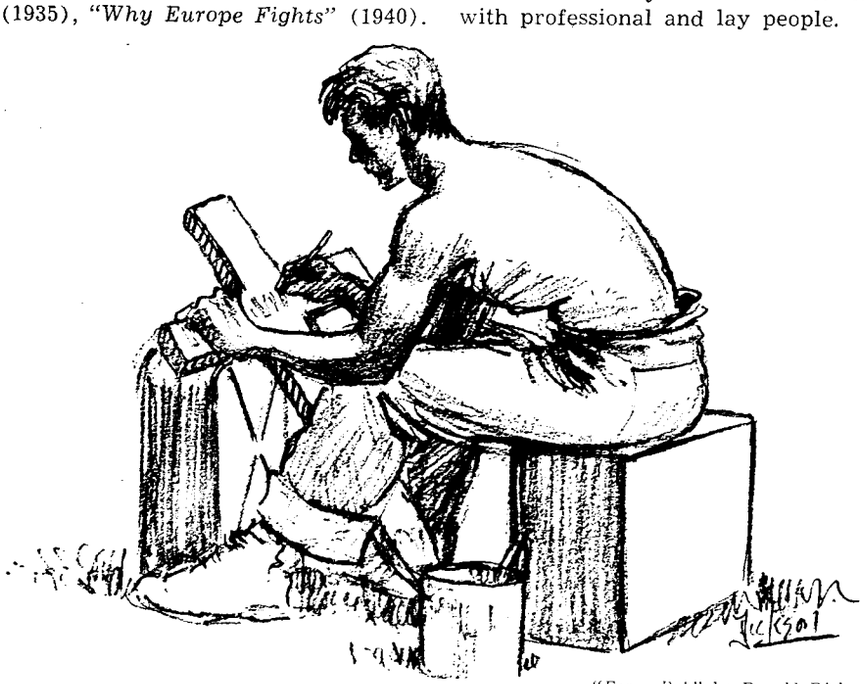
times in distant seas and sometimes in direct support, played a vital role in the Marines' own war. Pratt pays a good deal of attention to the covering and bombarding squadrons, giving the ships by name and something of their experiences. He goes with some detail into the planning behind each deadly operation, and is sometimes critical of what he believes to be the reasons for the inevitable gaps between plan and performance. Whether his criticisms are sound I am incompetent to say; they are at any rate largely on the tactical level. Into the major controversies over the conduct of the Pacific war as a whole he rarely enters, nor does he pause to analyze the specific concept and functions of an amphibious force in the context of contemporary warfare.

Hough's "The Island War" is primarily a book about the Marines. "The Marines' War" is primarily a military critic's book about a great oceanic struggle of which the Marines carried the major brunt. What the latter gains in sweep it loses in color and detail. One suspects that Marines will prefer Hough; but that the reader interested in a general conspectus of the military history of the late conflict (if such a person still exists) will find Pratt more nearly his dish. He should be warned, however, that in Pratt he will have to contend with a wretchedly inadequate series of sketch maps and with a degree of typographical error which seems deplorable.

Walter Millis, journalist and editorial writer, wrote "Road to War" (1935), "Why Europe Fights" (1940).



—"For a Pal," by Donald Dickson.

"The Marines' war was that remarkable series of bloody and bitter amphibious campaigns from Guadalcanal and Tarawa to Iwo Jima and Okinawa."

Education.

The mounting attack on the inadequacies of education in this great democracy has been carried forward on two levels. Mr. Fine's "Our Children Are Cheated," reviewed here, gives facts, figures, and recommendations on such practical matters as salaries, teacher shortages, inadequate facilities. The content, effectiveness, and philosophy of our teaching are analyzed and a new synthesis suggested in Harold Rugg's fine "Foundations for American Education" [reviewed in SRL *Jan. 10]. A sociological approach to the problem can be found in Edwards and Richey's "The School in the American Social Order." . . . Maurice Shore's "Soviet Education," reviewed below, and the Soviet textbook earlier republished by Counts and Lodge as "I Want to Be Like Stalin" illuminate an educational system far different from ours, with its own faults, but also with its own strengths from which we might learn.*

A National Paradox

OUR CHILDREN ARE CHEATED: The Crisis in American Education. By Benjamin Fine. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 244 pp. $3.

Reviewed by LUCY SPRAGUE MITCHELL

"OUR CHILDREN Are Cheated" is the challenging title of a challenging and important book, to be read and pondered upon by all who believe, as its author, Benjamin Fine does, that children are important for themselves and that their education is important in our democratic culture. Mr. Fine's pages are filled with hard, factual evidence of a national "school breakdown," most of which he gathered in his comprehensive, nation-wide survey of our schools from kindergarten through college — the facts enlivened by direct conversations with professional and lay people.

Mr. Fine first presents evidence of the plight of teachers and the consequent desertion of the teaching profession: all types of schools, he says, from kindergarten through college, in all forty-eight states, face an acute teacher shortage. Results: nearly 6,000 schools have been closed. Everywhere, schools have been kept open only through employing unqualified teachers. The number of teachers holding substandard or emergency certificates before the war was one in 400; now it is one in seven. Teacher turnover is twice what it was before the war. Teacher shortage is neither a local nor a temporary phenomenon. More than 350,000 teachers have left the classrooms since 1941, of whom only a small proportion have returned. Future supply of new teachers will be greatly reduced since registration in teachers' colleges has fallen far below pre-war numbers. Yet the school population will increase rapidly.

Why is the teaching profession being deserted? Mr. Fine asks. Because teachers' salaries are low—far lower than possible earnings in industries. In 1947 average teacher salary in the United States was about forty dollars a week. Still worse, 10,000 teachers get less than twelve dollars a week; another 200,000 get twenty-five dollars weekly or less. Even unmarried teachers cannot meet present costs of living and many have families to support. Teaching is an insecure job. Fifty-eight per cent of our teachers have inadequate or no tenure laws; retirement pay, when there is any, averages about $15 a week. Teachers have recently joined unions in unprecedented numbers; in many places they have attempted to get their salaries raised through strikes—a shock to the public, but it may be the public needed such a shock to recognize the plight of teachers. Many

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communities do not give teaching the status of a profession. Teachers are often discharged if they marry; told they must not smoke or take a cocktail in public, told what church to attend, etc. In many school systems, teacher initiative and creativeness are crushed. They are on the lowest rung of the hierarchical ladder and are expected merely to follow orders and seldom share large school problems such as planning the curriculum.

Elementary and high-school buildings have deteriorated—many are fire hazards, without adequate sanitary provisions, without libraries or laboratories; their equipment is inadequate and antiquated.

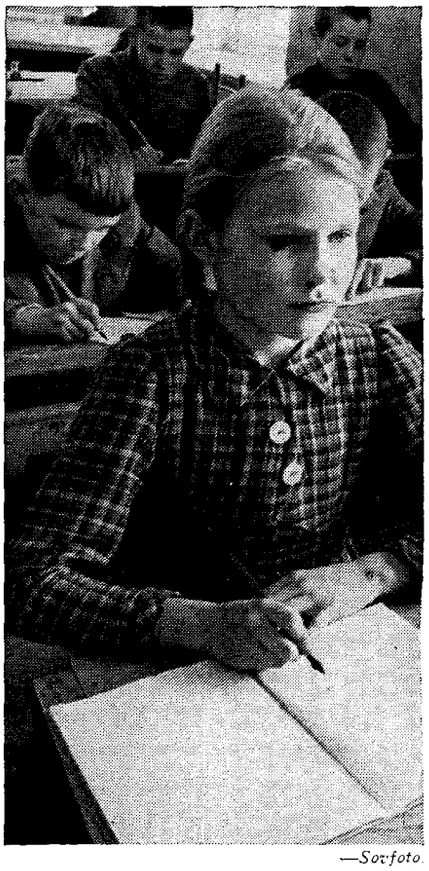
Colleges, swamped by veterans under the G. I. Bill (registration doubled in some places), cannot meet costs of additional faculty and buildings. Educational opportunities offered our children are extremely unequal. Children in poor communities, particularly in rural and poor Southern states, are cheated, though these areas spend a larger proportion of their income on school than do urban communities and Northern states. (Highest per capita expenditure is $125 in New York—higher in New York City. Lowest for a white child is $36.87 in Arkansas; lowest for a colored child is $7.36 in Mississippi.)

For the most part, Mr. Fine confines his report and his analysis to objective data such as the samples just given. There is little evaluation of curriculum in his book except a timely but rather sketchy picture of the inadequacy of the curriculum in teachers' colleges. Before, and particularly during, the war there was a new and widespread interest in children. The relatively recent findings in child development were bringing about new attitudes towards children and curriculum throughout the schools of our country. It is doubly tragic to have a national school breakdown at this strategic moment in school thinking.

Who is responsible for our school breakdown? Mr. Fine inquires. Who can stop this wholesale cheating of our children? The answer to both questions, as it must be in a democracy, is "we, the people." A condition such as ours today implies both ignorance and inattention on the part of the people. To the people of the United States, Mr. Fine makes these recommendations: greater financial support to the public schools (partly through Federal aid) to raise teachers' salaries, to improve school facilities (particularly in rural schools, to equalize opportunities for Negro students, and to provide better health programs); improvement of working conditions for teachers, and passage of adequate tenure and retirement laws; higher requirements and standards for the teaching profession, improvement of teacher-training institutions, and introduction of modern teaching methods; elimination of community restrictions and meddling, and greater teacher participation in school programs; better recruitment program, and greater public interest in nation's schools. A big and costly program to meet a big and costly crisis in education.

Are we willing to pay the costs? Or shall we continue to cheat our children? Have we stopped believing in education? Even those who have no direct interest in children—and surely they are the minority—must feel uneasy in knowing that ten million of our voting citizens are illiterate. Just from the economic point of view, education is a sound investment. Cheating is the worst policy—to invert Franklin's hard-boiled statement. For uneducated citizens contribute less than educated to our national income—to national prosperity.

Here is a strange picture in the richest, most prosperous nation on the earth, where education for all has long been accepted as a cornerstone of democracy, at the beginning of the atomic age when education for all seems an obvious imperative. Never before has the need to understand science been so great. Never before has the need to understand our own democratic culture and the culture of others been so widely recognized. Our country is struggling to live up to its new role in the world, to explain democracy to other nations. Yet at this crucial moment, we are cheating our children out of their educations, and thereby cheating democracy and cheating the world. Truly, it is a picture that should get us all into action.



—Sovfoto

"Harsh facts of life led to the abandonment [1935] of some 'advanced' characteristics of the Soviet educational methods."

Lucy Sprague Mitchell is head of Bank Street Teachers' Schools, New York City.

Applied Marxism

SOVIET EDUCATION. By Maurice J. Shore. New York: Philosophical Library. 1947. 346 *pp.* $4.75.

Reviewed by D. FEDOTOFF WHITE

THOSE who are old enough may remember the rapturous praise of the Soviet educational methods by American liberals in the Twenties. They also may recall the equally loud abuse which was voiced by some former admirers of the Soviet system upon the appearance of the Decree on Academic Reform issued by the Soviet authorities in 1935.

Objective observers had a suspicion that the adulators of the Twenties had failed to notice the chasm between the blueprint and the economic and cultural prerequisites for its successful application, while the virulent critics of the changes of 1935 did not analyze carefully the harsh facts of life which led to the abandonment of some of the "advanced" characteristics of the Soviet educational methods.

Mr. Shore approaches his task from an objective and enlightened viewpoint. He feels strongly that:

> the basic need today is not so much scientific control of nature as the adequacy of man's living among men. Coordinated research, therefore, should be directed at evolving an educational process wherein man, living in an interwoven world, could be educated in giving himself more to man for the good of all. Already, many educators are aware of man's urgent need for a unified world. Today, American and Soviet educators should place themselves in a position to evolve a working relationship towards that goal.

In the first five parts of his volume, Mr. Shore examines the Marxian theory of education as evolved by the founders of Marxism and amended or adopted by its later exponents.

The author has carefully studied the writings of Marx, Engles, and Lenin—and quotes these writings a

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considerable length. In dealing with Marxian ideas on education, he succeeds in presenting a scholarly and well-founded exposition of the views of the founding fathers of Marxism. Unfortunately, the discussion of dialectical materialism is not as felicitous.

Parts six and seven are given to an analysis of the application of the Marxian educational theories in Soviet Russia, and to the abandonment of the "progressive" system and the so-called "polytechnic" method of education. It is clear from the evidence presented by the author that neither the Soviet economy nor the Soviet cadres of teachers had been adequate in the past to assure the successful application of the interesting ideas contained in the polytechnic approach to education. The change from the more "advanced" to the more conventional (for Russia, at least) methods of governing school life and imparting school learning is not as comprehensibly dealt with, nor does Mr. Shore adequately examine the evidence on the non-military practical considerations which led to the reforms.

The problem of the ideological content of Soviet education is handled objectively. Mr. Shore maintains that during the three decades of the existence of the Soviet state while "there might have been concessions, retrenchments, and retractions . . . nearly all of these were of a temporary nature. The foundations, theoretical and practical, always remained. Today, in continuation of its firm and direct line, and in consonance with the Soviet economic base, education aims to labor in the nurture of Soviet men for transition from socialism to communism."

Clearly, this conclusion is open to well-founded objections. Just the same, Mr. Shore has brought together enough evidence to entitle him, to say the least, to as good a hearing as was vouchsafed to the early hosannas and the later vituperations.

One of the serious defects of the book is the lack of an adequate examination of the Russian pre-Revolutionary, non-Marxian pedagogical ideas. Yujakov's project, referred to by the author, was not the most intelligent of these. One has good reasons to doubt whether the author is right when he ascribes "enormous importance" to Lenin's rejection of it.

All this is not said with a view to belittle the considerable contribution the author has made to the understanding of the Marxian theories of education and of their application on Soviet soil. Mr. Shore has written an important book. His work deserves to be widely read.

Belles-Lettres.

The Sitwells, according to our reviewer of Sir Osbert's "Great Morning!" [SRL *Oct. 18*], *introduce us into "a world which seems to spin gently between the arbitrary but efficient poles of the Beautiful and the Absurd—a world as nearly perfect as such a world could be." Poets, critics, iconoclasts, antiquarians, the three Sitwells of Renshaw Hall, Derbyshire—Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell—embody the quintessence of literary England. The Sitwell mind, divorced from localism, ranges from the Byzantine Empire to the most abstruse of poetic images, yet the Sitwell prosperity still rests on Derbyshire coal. The new writers of our own Northwest, represented in the regional symposium reviewed below, are more immediately responsive to the environment of their magnificent land. Their work is the promise of a new literature; that of the Sitwells is the fulfilment of an old one.*

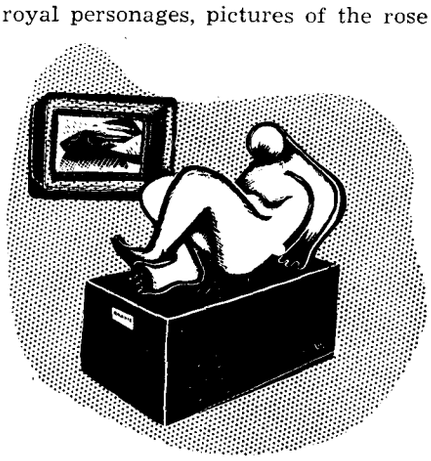
Dilettantism par Excellence

THE HUNTERS AND THE HUNTED. By Sacheverell Sitwell. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1948. 314 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by JOHN WILLIAM ROGERS

ONCE this reviewer met a man who had purchased a bottle of patent medicine. With sententious relish, he proceeded to pronounce the separate ingredients of the bottle which the law makes the manufacturer put upon the label. Nothing could be further from the erudite elegance of the Sitwells than this ignorant bumpkin, and yet we thought of him as we perused Sacheverell's latest book. For in spite of the display of a vast knowledge of strange and little-known subjects, in spite of lush passages of literary embroidery, and in spite of a profound esthetic sensitiveness which is at moments genuinely illuminating, there are pages of pretentious display in this volume which are actually as little rewarding to the ordinary reader as making a recitation of a patent medicine label.

You will find discussed and at least partially described such a variety of things as palaces of Byzantine emperors, the hunts of Maxmilian and other royal personages, pictures of the rose



and of the blue periods of Picasso, famous clowns and famous dancers of a vanished age, compositions of Mozart and of Liszt, African Negroes, fashions for children's clothes in 1885, the heroines of "The Tales of Hoffmann"—the list is endless and as ranging as it is long. And as if to add a further sense of the bizarre to his volume, its illustrations at times seem to have no point in being there, except that the author liked them.

The general impression is that of a suave and entertaining talker in a drawing room, full of knowledge and intoxicated by the sound of his own cultivated voice (in this case the ability to play elegantly with words), leaping from subject to subject in an unending stream. And, as usually happens with such talkers, a good deal of the time even the most intent listener has but the vaguest notion of what is being said. The talker, carried away by his own memories, fails to draw his pictures with an objectivity which would really communicate them to his unitiated hearers. In like fashion, Sitwell seems not so much concerned with clarity of idea for his readers as in setting down notes to recall for his own pleasure and entertainment things that he has particularly enjoyed.

Of this strange melange of subjects, in one place the author remarks:

> This is not to be a portrait of our immediate past, present, or to come; nor the history of any event whatever. Instead, being only an artist or musician in appreciation, and having but that faculty to be spellbound or rooted to the ground unable to move hand or foot while it lasts, by a magic that we cannot explain or understand, we would describe the descent of the god into ourselves and be personal, for the spirit wanders far and wide in search of persons. But this is not

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the square of mirror put outside the window to reflect the passers-by. It is to be our times; but the world of the individual, not the million.

And again he writes:

> We promised an entertainment among the persons and buildings that are peculiar to our state of mind, fruits of the architectural and musical experience of half a lifetime. It has been flowering in these pages, but it is not complete.

In the multi-volumed autobiography which has been appearing, Sacheverell's brother, Osbert, has been painting a picture of the family background and of their amazing father, a gentleman who lived incredibly in the ivory tower of his own interests. "The Hunters and the Hunted" reveals a man remarkably the son of that father—an author who is infuriating because of a disregard of the fundamentals of clarity in writing for the ordinary reader, and at the same time compelling because of the intensity with which he pursues the classic and artistic ideas which interest him.

This book, strongly marked by dilettantism, a volume well-nigh incomprehensible to anyone who is not capable of esthetic feeling and a culture broad enough to ferret out at least a portion of the all-too-passing obscure allusions, is at times precious and—as we began by saying—at times emptier than the beautiful writing leads one to suspect. But it reflects an eager mind of high quality. It is one more garland pleached by a member of what is certainly the most rococo, if not the most remarkable, literary family writing in England today.

Some Oregon Talk

NORTHWEST HARVEST: A Regional Stock-Taking. Edited by V. L. O. Chittick. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1948. 226 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by WALTER HAVIGHURST

IN NOVEMBER 1946, there was held at Portland, Oregon, a writers' conference—with a difference. It was a conference not only of writers but also of educators and publicists, and it was not a discussion of the techniques of writing and publishing but rather of the substance of writing in the Northwest. This printed record of its sessions indicates the Northwest, our youngest region, has attained an acute literary consciousness.

A generation ago there was hardly a writer within a thousand miles of Puget Sound. Now there are many. They are aware of the physical grandeur of their region, of its natural power, of its vast timber operations, of the labor troubles that have given it a history unlike that of any other American frontier. In this conference some of them discussed the influence of environment on regional development. They voiced an unprovincial enthusiasm for the Northwest background and a welcome for new writers who were not present.

There is a wide range of subject and opinion in these papers. Stewart Holbrook looks back at the vanishing lumberjack and forward to new technologies in forestry and forest products. Richard Neuberger pleads for a stable self-development of Alaska in place of past and present exploitation. Joseph Kinsey Howard sees in the Northwest and Alaska the individual making his last stand against technological civilization. James Stevens, to the contrary, finds the new folklore forgets the land; he traces the individual's surrender to the organized mass and the surrender of the mass to machines.

There are pointed and intelligent comments on regionalism (of which no writer was ever conscious) by Peter Odegard, Carl Van Doren, Allis McKay, Joseph B. Harrison, Harold G. Merriam. The comments add up to Mr. Merriam's statement: "Being regional in the best way is being universal in the best way." Certainly place is important. So little of a regionalist as Maugham once said that no story of his could have been placed in any other spot than exactly the one in which he laid it. But place is important only as a setting for human experience.

People have said that when you can fly from New York to Seattle in a day the coasts will be as close to each other as New York was to Philadelphia a century ago. That isn't so. The distance is still there, and it is our good fortune that the differences remain. The Northwest is conscious now of its own mind. It is aware of its own writers, and it wants more of them. This conference expressed a desire for Northwest publishing media, so that their writers need not always look to New York. I was surprised to find no single reference to the long-established Caxton Printers in Idaho, nor to the vigorous young quarterly *The Pacific Spectator.*

There was good talk at this conference, and with it a realization that talk doesn't produce a literature. Writing gets done in lonely ways. Colleges can help, a little. Conferences can discuss significant themes in the society. But the essential material is always in the writer and not outside of him. The writer must make his own discovery of his environment. In that process the literary imagination may find significance where it was least expected. No writers' conference could have directed a young novelist to the themes of "Moby Dick" or "Huck Finn" or "The Red Badge of Courage" or "Winesburg, Ohio." A writer's work will spring from an intensity in his own experience, and that cannot be broadened or localized by discussions of regionalism.

These realizations were part of the "regional stock-taking" of "Northwest Harvest." It is a book that though focused on one region refuses to be confined there. Many people otuside the Northwest, as well as many in it, will be interested in the enlightened talk at Portland.

Shower

By Fleming MacLiesh

SEATED at breakfast, in the indigent country
Of habit, with spoon half lifted, suddenly
Before my preoccupied wife and oblivious child
Waylaid by thunder, tapped with thunder's warrant
And hailed to the threshold of annihilation:
Immobilized and limned in leaping current
In the lightning's explosive arc, I see
The obstinate structures of identity
Fade into outline as the intractible bone,
Flesh, blood and muscle under gamma rays
Are fogged upon a film. One over one,
The disparate and distinct, the deserted highway,
The kitten on the porch, the sheltering bird,
My family and portentous self are blurred
And blend with the agitation of the oak
And air and convulsive cumulus and the smooth grass
As time with its molecules fused by this stroke
Like sand by radiation turns to glass.
All that seems self-determined, self-defined
By mortal, upstart error of the mind,
Its crippling arrogance, now at one pass
Of the Magician stands indifferent, still,
And transparent as the paralyzed will.

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Down a Royal Literary Line

REVALUATION: TRADITION AND DEVELOPMENT IN ENGLISH POETRY. By F. R. Leavis. George W. Stewart, Inc. 1947. 275 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by HENRY W. WELLS

IT IS the chief virtue of Mr. Leavis's criticism that he makes his points directly and with no beating about the bush. In terse, economical style he says many things about English poetry which have been said before but seldom said so cogently. His ample quotations are well chosen, so that much of his comment is happily concrete. Moreover, he takes pains to weave his discussions of separate poets into a consistent pattern depicting English verse from Shakespeare and Donne to Shelley and Keats and, by reference and frequent implication, through the Victorians to the present. He presses literary history into capsule form.

Although refreshing in style, the book is hardly intended to be original. Writing with profound and repeated deference to T. S. Eliot, the author follows a "line" as familiar as any from Moscow. The theory, in brief, is that the true, and British, tradition is exemplified in Shakespeare and Donne and so transmitted in an almost perfect lyric and a truly aristocratic form through the Metaphysicals up to Marvell; that Spenser and Milton are the twin fountainheads of our errors; that Doctor Johnson and the eighteenth-century at its realistic and conservative best have much to say for themselves, although the usual run of Augustan verse is thin; that Wordsworth is noble though misled; that Byron and Coleridge are of small account; that Shelley epitomizes bad poetry; and that T. S. Eliot has shown by precept and practice what verse should be. Leavis has a few minor and unimportant deflections from this orthodoxy. He much prefers Pope to Dryden; he thinks very poorly of Prior and of Cowper; and of Churchill apparently not at all. (The name of Chaucer seems unknown.)

In the opinion of this reviewer, many of his ideas are desiccated and misleading. He plays a fairly good defensive game; on the offensive he is almost always unconvincing. But the errors are fundamental. Poetry has many qualities of which this singularly arrogant, humorless, bloodless, and academic critic remains unconscious. Addicted to a species of word-mongering, he deals more often with shadow than with substance and remains unaware of basic functions which poetry performs. An admirable representative of a poor school, he should reexamine his premises.

Love...The Kind I Mean

By Margaret Stavely

LOVE—the kind I mean—
isn't sheltered by a dream;

isn't copied from pages
where poetry is;

isn't usually accidental,
often costing high rental

many times paid hourly
and not happy;

impressed with terrific slowness
weary as the old caress

rock feels from slow water,
softening to shapes wind can't slaughter

or millers grind to dusty flour
to keep themselves alive an hour,

having such hardness and such excellent sheen . . .
love—the kind I mean.

For John Q. Public

GOOD READING: A Guide to the World's Best Books. Edited by the Committee on College Reading, Atwood H. Townsend, Chairman. New York: Penguin Books, Inc. 1947. 211 pp. 35 cents.

Reviewed by RAYMOND WALTERS, JR.

OF THE making of books about the world's best books there is apparently no end. Newest and certainly one of the most useful is "Good Reading," a handy-sized, moderately-priced volume sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English. Its chief features are three: a compact outline history of literature; practical suggestions for educating yourself through reading; and a critically annotated list of more than 1000 solid but readable works of every type, from belles-lettres to science, written between 500 B.C. and 1947 A.D.

"Good Reading" was a long time in the making and is the product of many minds. Back in 1932 a few English instructors, using surveys of college students' reading as a foundation, compiled a pamphlet guide for undergraduates. This proved so serviceable that during the next fifteen years it went through ten editions, its circle of contributors meanwhile being widened to include nearly fifty professors and editors from every section of the country. In the present enlarged edition, the first prepared for the general public, a non-academic touch has been added; such literary lights as John Dos Passos, Clifton Fadiman, and John Hersey offer their personal lists of basic books. Most piquant of these is Sinclair Lewis's, in which he reports a preference for "the first twenty volumes of the 'Encyclopedia Britannica'." What has Mr. Lewis against "Sord to Zygo"?

Like most collaborative jobs, the quality of "Good Reading" varies from section to section; but the average is high, the taste represented in the choices eclectic, the critical comments informed and sensible.

—*Pach Bros.*

My Current Reading

Virginia C. Gildersleeve, former Dean of Barnard College, who has recently resigned as an alternate delegate of the United States to the General Assembly of the United Nations, has submitted this list of her reading today. Miss Gildersleeve gives her occupation, appropriately, as "international relations."

THE WHITE PLUMED HENRY, KING OF FRANCE, *by George Slocombe (Cosmopolitan)*

I WANT TO BE LIKE STALIN, *by George S. Counts and Nucia P. Lodge (John Day)*

SAUDIA ARABIA, *by K. S. Twitchell (Princeton University Press)*

THE MEETING OF EAST AND WEST, *by F. S. C. Northrop (Macmillan)*

THE NARROW LAND: FOLK CHRONICLES OF OLD CAPE COD, *by Elizabeth Reynard (Houghton Mifflin)*

HISTORY OF THE ISLAMIC PEOPLES, *by Carl Brockelmann (Putnam)*

WHOSE BODY? *by Dorothy Sayers (Harcourt)*

DRINK TO YESTERDAY, *by Manning Coles (Knopf — also Bantam Books)*

THE ENCHANTED APRIL, *by "Elizabeth" (Mary Annette Beauchamp Arnim) (Doubleday)*

ARABIA DESERTA, *by Charles M. Doughty*

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The "Rebecca" Case

THERE is a lesson to be studied by publishers and authors from the "Rebecca" Case, the trial of Daphne DuMaurier for plagiarism held last October in a United States District Court in New York, and now happily terminated by Judge John Bright's recent twenty-two-page decision. It is to be hoped that the proceedings of the trial and the Judge's conclusions will be examined from various aspects by gentlemen of the law who may have to decide in the future whether some author of a book should be dragged to court like a felon accused of stealing.

If "Rebecca," that remarkable and deservedly popular novel, could be attacked on the grounds that it was a plagiarism from so inept and dissimilar a performance as Edwina MacDonald's "Blind Windows," one of the many second-wife novels published in the last twenty years, then any author who writes a successful book on any subject that has been used before places his reputation and his fortune in hazard. There are a limited number of ideas for fiction, and no matter how many times they are subdivided, it is difficult if not impossible to avoid a similarity of themes. From the publisher's standpoint the situation is dangerous in the extreme, for trials of this nature are costly and disturbing.

The "Rebecca" Case is an outstanding example of recent plagiarism suits for several reasons. The author was a distinguished Englishwoman, a member of a gifted family, compelled to come to New York to defend her integrity as a writer. She had proved, before and since "Rebecca" was written, that she was a fertile, dramatic, and popular writer. There were few writers who had less need to copy or borrow from the work of others. "Rebecca" was published by one of the largest and the most reputable firms in America who knew well that it was founded on a familiar story, but none of those editors conceived of the possibility that it was a plagiarism. From long and sad experience the great motion-picture houses are aware of the danger of suits of this nature, yet there is no record that Selznick International or United Artists questioned the complete validity of the novel.

There had been a previous accusation of plagiarism against "Rebecca," which did not come to trial because it was proved that Miss DuMaurier could not have seen the book. A Brazilian novelist, Caroline Nabuco, and various Brazilian critics caused a stir in the American press when they observed that there were similarities between Miss Nabuco's novel and "Rebecca" and assumed that somehow the English writer had seen the manuscript of the English translation which had been sent to America. How many more writers had been speculating on the chances of their own second-wife novels in a legal contest with "Rebecca" no one knows. If Miss DuMaurier had been convicted of plagiarism, the heirs, if they could be found, of Charlotte Brontë, might be expected to present their claim for stealing from "Jane Eyre," on the evidence that the situation of both Jane and the heroine of "Rebecca" were somehow alike.

Since the writer of this editorial was employed as an "expert" witness for the defense, he had an opportunity of watching the conduct of the trial and was forced to read as many second-wife novels as he could find, including the translation of another South American novel which, curiously enough, had far more resemblance to "Rebecca," than had "Blind Windows." It was astonishing to discover how many of them were alike and in how many ways. It would appear that for the purposes of fiction all second wives walked into luxurious mansions after they were married; that they were all shocked by the traces of occupancy the first wife had left behind—the engraved silver and embroidered linen, the portrait and the mirror in the bedroom in which there usually appeared the wraith of a beautiful dead woman. Further, there was usually a mystery about the first wife; in some she had been mad; in "Rebecca" she had been murdered by her husband; in others she had been astonishingly unfaithful; in more than one she was the very image of her successor. Of them all, "Rebecca" was the most original and the most vital. Danvers, the grim housekeeper of Manderley, was an original conception, as was the entire section dealing with Max de Winter's murder of Rebecca, the dramatic chapter in which it was proved that Rebecca was dying of cancer and so might have committed suicide.

However popular it proved to be, the book was a work of literature, the characters were vital and alive, and the atmosphere of suspense necessary in a story of this sort was achieved with masterly skill. The evidence of the novel's originality was plain for anyone to see.

And yet here was a trial that dragged an author across the Atlantic. The scene in the darkly impressive courtroom on Foley Square was grim enough. Miss DuMaurier sat in the witness chair bowed forward and answered her accusers in a quiet and calm voice. She was obviously suffering and deeply embarrassed. She might well have been, since the lawyers for the plaintiff quoted sentences she had written about her father and her family, for example, that some of them could lie charmingly if they wanted to, and that a feminine ancestor or two had broken more than one of the Commandments. She was accused by indirection of inheriting their levity and therefore of being capable of not telling the truth as a witness and of being an immoral woman. Judge Bright was scrupulously fair throughout, but it seemed to be impossible in this kind of trial in which a writer's honesty is impugned to keep out what anywhere but in courtroom would be plain libel.

Judge Bright's decision could not have been clearer. He wrote, "In reader appeal, in description of the scenes and characters, and in literary skill, there can be no claim in my judgment that the latter was copied from the former." Since this had been apparent to everyone who knew anything about it, with the exception of the plaintiff's lawyers, why then had it been necessary to have a trial at all? Some way must be found of preventing this injustice and manifest injury to a writer's purse and his honor. The "Rebecca" Case may lead the way.

H. S.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

People Who Live in Glass Houses

SIR: Because I know Sweden well and am the author of two books on Sweden, one published before the war and another due to come off the press in a few months, I am emboldened to comment on the review of Mrs. Edith Sulkin's book "Continent in Limbo" [*SRL* Jan. 3].

I sincerely believe that Mrs. Sulkin, and by reflection the *SRL* review, did Sweden a great injustice. As Mrs. Sulkin sees it (in the words of the reviewer):

> Most of the Swedes saw no difference between the Nazis and the democracies. Even the suffering and heroism of their Norwegian cousins had not shaken the Swedes in their determination to be luxury-enjoying bystanders while millions of people the world over were fighting and dying for freedom.

She also finds that "the Swedish ruling class and the army were pro-German and probably also pro-Nazi" and that "the working class people were . . . benevolent in their attitude towards Hitler" and "were enveloped in the glow and joy of pure materialism." She finds that "Stockholm was a boom town, wallowing in luxury at a time when virtually all of Europe was horribly hungry."

It does not seem to me that we Americans should be the ones to cast the first stone. We sat out the war until December 7, 1941, and would undoubtedly have continued to do so had we not been jarred into action by a direct attack. Nor does it seem to me that Mrs. Sulkin is fair in her generalities. *She fails to mention that on the other side of Sweden lay Finland,* in which Swedish roots are sunk very deep and which was a Swedish possession for 650 years.

Actually Sweden's emotions were torn to shreds by the sufferings all around her. Countless individual Swedes did all they could to aid both Norwegians and Finns. I know of many personal deprivations eagerly endured in aid of the neighbors on both sides, and I know that Stockholmers by the tens of thousands showed a sacrificial spirit that matched the best our country has shown.

I don't know what Swedish army reaction may have been but I feel certain that very few Swedes of the ruling class were pro-Nazi. In 1939 I talked with many of them and only *two* seemed to be even "neutral," in the sense that Mrs. Sulkin uses the word. They were sharply, vocally anti-Nazi in all other cases, but their feelings were roiled by their deep sympathy for the Finns, who had suffered much from Russia. This feeling was enormously accentuated by the Soviet attack on Finland in 1939.

SYDNEY CLARK.

Sagamore Beach, Mass.

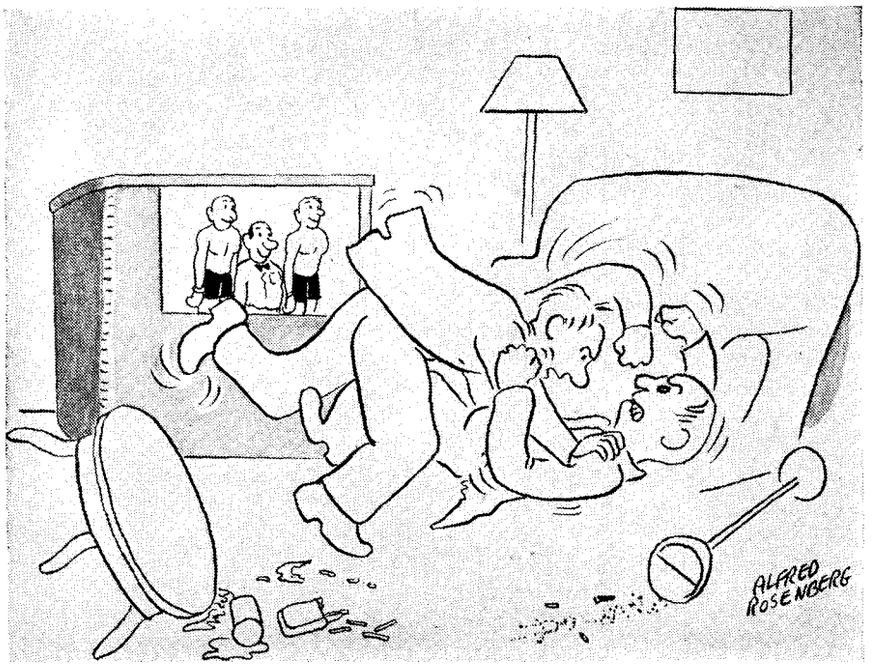
Mistaken

SIR: Either Merle Miller has done a careless job of reading "Green Memories" by Lewis Mumford, [*SRL* Dec. 13] or else author Mumford is mistaken as to the division with which his son fought. The 95th Division, to which Mr. Miller assigns Geddes Mumford, was never in Italy, England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany—yes. But Italy—no.

My authority? I was with the 95th from its activation in Texas to the demobilization at Camp Shelby, Miss.

GLEN I. DANFORTH.

Hamburg, Iowa



SIR: Mr. Danforth is perfectly right, and the error was not Lewis Mumford's but my own. Geddes, as the book points out at least a dozen times, was a member of the 91st, not of the 95th, Division. If I only had taken the trouble to remember, I would have known this because the Continental edition of *Yank* published at least two major stories about the drive of the 95th across Europe. The 95th was never in Italy and the 91st was never in Germany.

MERLE MILLER.

New York, N. Y.

"Calliope and the Critics"

SIR: Both as a professional book reviewer and a writing instructor at Columbia University, I was extremely interested in Louis Bromfield's "Calliope and the Critics" (*SRL* Dec. 27). Although I agree with Mr. Bromfield's over-all thesis that commercialism is crippling modern literature, I take exception with him that the reviewer is one of the chief culprits in this insidious process.

The ordinary reviewer, and by ordinary I mean the free-lance critic whose efforts are confined to the Sunday supplements or their equivalents, is, by and large, a frustrated individual. His editors confine him to a very limited wordage content, usually from 200 to 500 words. If he dares transcend these limits, he finds his review drastically cut—generally, the critical element, and what is left justifies Mr. Bromfield's contention that the reviewer is only "a reporter who rehashes the plot."

Not even Mr. Bromfield will deny that a certain amount of plot is necessary to make a review understandable to readers who have not read the book under scrutiny. Unfortunately, by the time the reviewer has described the plot briefly, his critical remarks must be confined to an unsatisfactory generalization.

I once asked one of my editors if I might dispense with a plot summary, except for a sentence or two. I was informed that his readers wanted to know what the book was all about, and that my criticism was secondary. "They can't read every book," he told me, "but they want to know about them all. And that's what we give them."

Mr. Bromfield is perfectly correct when he states that the ballyhooed books are given feature billing by book review editors, while many good but unheralded works, if they get space at all, make only the back pages. But that is hardly the reviewer's fault. I have had the enervating experience of writing reviews that never appeared. And some of them concerned really fine novels.

Very possibly, some reviewers are awed by the economic history of a high pressured book or by an author's reputation. But they are definitely in the minority. The honest reviewer (and most of them are) is not afraid of condemning what Mr. Goldwyn has condoned. The reviews of Erskine Caldwell's "The Sure Hand of God" uniformly complained that Mr. Caldwell had overdone the "Tobacco Road" approach. Wakeman's "The Saxon

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Charm," surely a notorious example of literary ballyhooing, suffered badly at the critic's hands. And if an unknown writer produces a book of distinction, despite the fact that its too-brief review appears in the back of the book, the reviewer spares no efforts to spread the gospel. Witness John Horne Burns's "The Gallery."

I believe that the reviewer can be an important influence in contemporary letters if he is unleashed. If fewer and better books were reviewed, and the reviewer allowed sufficient room in which to turn around, I think that much of Mr. Bromfield's criticism on that score would become moot. Unfortunately, as the situation exists today, he is painfully right, but the blame is on other shoulders than the reviewer's.

WILLIAM M. KUNSTLER.

Long Island City, N. Y.

Might = Right?

SIR: The editorial "End of a Year," by Harrison Smith [*SRL* Dec. 27], leaves one gasping. Does the author *really* believe that "becoming so strong that no one will dare attack us" offers any hope of solving our differences with Russia? Does he really believe that extending credits of "money, materials, and arms" in order to uphold certain European governments represents the kind of effort necessary to save the world from ruin? Does he really believe that military preparedness can bring security? Does he really believe that after "remodeling ourselves into a grim colossus of armed strength" we would have left any civil liberties or free enterprise? Does he really believe that armed might, power, bigness, force, are the ultimate realities and that trusting them is true realism?

RICHARD SHUFFLEBARGER.

Martinsville, Ind.

SIR: To "become so strong that no one will ever dare attack us" has been tried many times through history —and found to be quite impractical. Further, strength is not what prevents attack. If anything, the apparent intention of muscling up hastens the attack.

Surely all who "care to think" have not come to the same generalized conclusions. We may be bankrupt of reason, as you suggest. More likely we are bereft of the necessary volition to follow our reason. We shall not be saved, for certain, if our only trust is in "our armed migfiht and continued *prosperity*."

Seriously, permit me to urge you to speak out strongly and courageously—putting your trust in something more permanent than either armed might or prosperity—on the matter of Universal Military Training. Surely those who "care to think," as you humbly confess for yourself, will have something cogent and forceful to say in opposition to this "starting gun" of a mad armaments race.

Speak. Speak urgently. Speak intelligently.

HUGH Q. MORTON.

Pasadena, Calif.

Soviet Forced Labor

SIR: Henry Shapiro who, if I am not mistaken, was an American correspondent in Russia, finds that "Forced Labor in Soviet Russia" by Boris Nicolaevsky and myself [*SRL* Oct. 4] exaggerates the importance and scope of forced labor in Russian politics and economy. He gives several proofs.

(1) The average Russian citizen knows the existence of labor camps but has no clear idea about the living conditions. Mr. Shapiro hastens to discover a contradiction between my assertion that "the average citizen is not well informed" and that of a former Soviet colonel that "the population is well aware of the forced labor and corrective camps." Any unprejudiced reader understands what the authors were trying to say.

(2) The book quotes a witness as saying that "by the end of 1943 not only the common people in Siberia but even the administration mentioned the figure of twenty-four millions in the camps in addition to the prison population." The figure obviously refers to the total in Europe, Central Asia, and Siberia. Mr. Shapiro, however, contends that this must be wrong since the total population of Siberia is below twenty-four millions—and then proceeds wittily to comment on the "highly imaginative" Russian race.

(3) The reviewer devotes considerable attention to estimates of the forced-labor population. He questions my own figures of from seven to twelve millions—which is one of the most conservative, compared with reports coming out of Russia. Since the book's publication I have heard repeated reproaches for having unduly minimized the total figure. Only consistent fellow-travelers consider it too high Mr. Shapiro quotes one such "expert" (who has never studied the problem) who says that, measured by *American standards*, there must be some 200,000 prisoners with long-term sentences in Russia. "His guess is no worse than anybody's," Mr. Shapiro adds!

(4) Mr. Shapiro triumphantly comes up with the well-known amnesty of 55,000 prisoners after the completion of the Moscow-Volga Canal. This in no way cancels our statement that prisoners who complete their terms are seldom released. The amnesties, announced in the early years of the forced labor system only, affected criminal elements, anyway, not political prisoners.

(5) The book mentions the Decree of April 7, 1935, which allowed the application of *every* penal measure to minors below eighteen. Many Soviet apologists like Mr. Shapiro have tried to efface the terrible impression created by this order by asserting that the pertinent Article 22 of the Criminal Code remained on the books. Yet in every country a new law supersedes ones on the same subject.

It is sad that American reporters in Russia are unable to collect information about forced labor in the Soviet Union. But many of them don't even seem interested in this somber aspect of Soviet life. When they come home, they often seem afraid of losing their visas to Russia and with it the opportunity to report. To keep the honor and privilege of shaking hands with Molotov and Vishinsky they must try to remain agreeable to the Soviet powers-that-be. The long arm of Soviet censorship seems to cramp their style when, even back home, they write about conditions inside Russia.

DAVID J. DALLIN.

New York, N. Y.

Annual Occurrence

SIR: One of the dependable harbingers of the Christmas season is the misplaced comma in what should be "God rest you merry, gentlemen."

If the comma is moved up to precede "merry," as it was in the last line of The Phoenix Nest, Dec. 6, it distorts the intended meaning of "rest" and transforms the carol into a lullaby of sorts.

GARLAND HICKEY.

New York, N. Y.

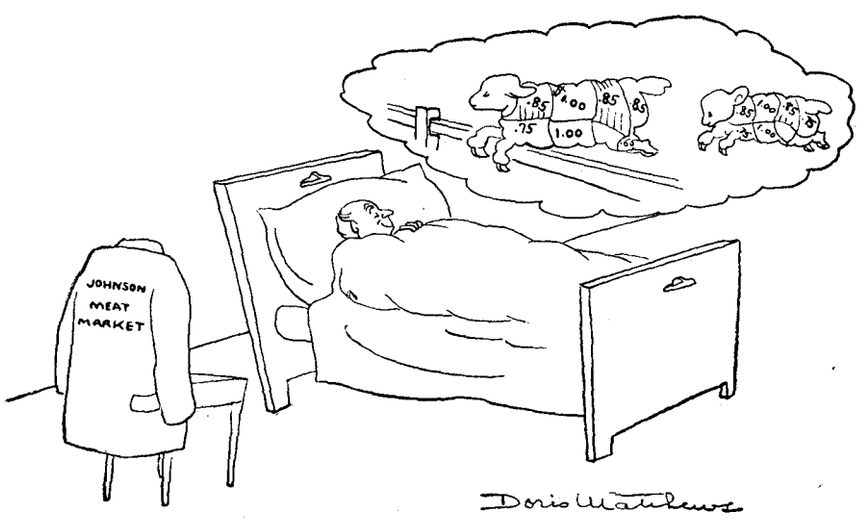
SIR: And now, at the close of The Phoenix Nest, comes the incorrect punctuation of, "God rest you merry, gentlemen."

Sic transit—

LINDSAY B. LONGACRE.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *There seem to be two schools of punctuation regarding this. At the time we debated the question and decided to abide by the authority of Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations."*



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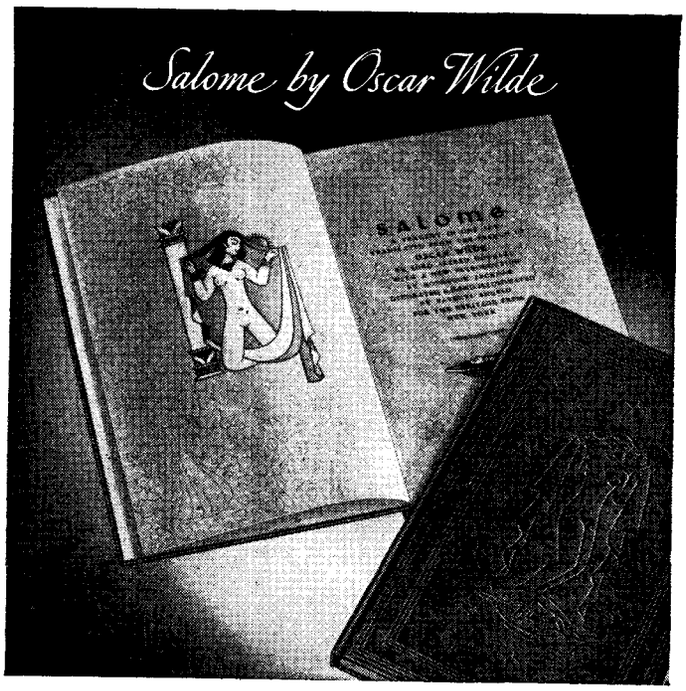

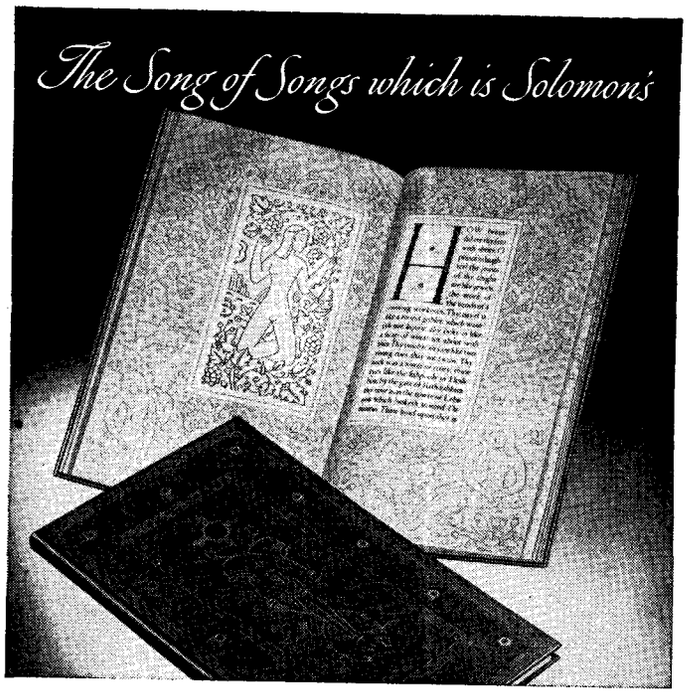

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Seeing Things

MR. SHAW ALMOST SYNTHESIZED

MR. SHAW, having had other and better things to do, can scarcely be expected to have read all the books and articles which over the lengthening decades have had their origins in him. Yet I do hope that, between birthdays, on some quiet evening at Ayot St. Lawrence, the old gentleman will steal the time to dip into the most recent, and, to my way of thinking, the fairest, the most illuminating, and the best analysis* so far to have been written of his beliefs, his methods, and his meaning. I have in mind the volume Eric Bentley has contributed to "The Makers of Modern Literature Series" that New Directions is publishing.

I would give a lot (who wouldn't, including Mr. Bentley?) to spy on Mr. Shaw as, and if, he encounters Mr. Bentley's "Bernard Shaw." Would the Shaw who has lived approve of the Shaw who has been deduced? Would he smile at, or applaud, a brilliant young man's daring to try to say for him what he has been saying for himself far more brilliantly and copiously all these dazzlingly articulate years?

Would his huge creative spirit and his far-ranging, intuitive mind (perfect expressions, both of them, of the Life Force) resent being book-bound, consolidated, systematized with professorial thoroughness, and made as orderly as life's chaos and contradictions can only become on a blackboard or in print when flesh and blood have been reduced to chalk or ink? Or would Mr. Shaw, after dipping into Mr. Bentley's volume, merely shrug his thin shoulders and put it down, knowing that time is short and that it is too late for him to do anything about his reputation? Would he accept this latest of the countless books written about him as no more than another tribute due his genius—as a fate that has overtaken Shakespeare and hence must overtake him — or would he regard it as another irksome penalty for his fame?

I do not pretend to know. I cannot even guess. Mr. Shaw in his nineties, Mr. Shaw in the white splendor of his prophet's beard, remains as blessedly unpredictable as he was in his youth when the patches of orange whiskers on his pale face caused someone to liken him to "an unskilfully poached egg." His unpredictability, his jubilant lack of orthodoxy, his glorious refusal to see the world through any eyes save his own—these are contributors to the joy Mr. Shaw has given and gives. They explain in part his abiding health both as a stimulant and a corrective. They have always been formidable weapons in his bulging arsenal.

—By Low in "Lions and Lambs."

G.B.S.: "I have produced no permanent impression because nobody ever believed me."

Unforeseeable, however, as Mr. Shaw's reactions may be, my suspicion is that, if he does bother to look into Mr. Bentley's volume, he will find cause to admire it. Yes, and even to be grateful for it. Certainly, Mr. Shaw would be amused at the confidence with which Mr. Bentley rushes in to defend G.B.S. not only from his enemies and his friends but from himself. Moreover, he would, I feel fairly sure, have to respect the ingenuity, the knowledge, and the tough athleticism of mind which Mr Bentley has brought to his task.

If I risk a prediction as to Mr. Shaw's approval of Mr. Bentley's book, I have my reasons. Way back in 1932, when Mr. Shaw was merely seventy-five, he wrote a letter to the managing editor of *Contempo* about the new and revised edition then appearing of Archibald Henderson's "authorized" life of him which had first been published when Shaw was a lad of fifty-five.

In that letter Mr. Shaw admitted the "signal service" Professor Henderson's book had done him in 1911.

> Up to that time [wrote G.B.S.] I was the victim of half a dozen reputations which seemed to be hopelessly insulated from one another. I was a man who wrote about pictures, a man who wrote about music, a man who wrote about the theatre, a man who wrote novels, a man who wrote plays, a man who wrote about economics, a funny man, a dangerous man, a man who preached at the City Temple, a Shelleyan atheist, a street corner agitator, a leading spirit in the Fabian society, a vegetarian, a humanitarian, and Heaven knows what else besides; but nobody seemed to know that these men were all the same man. It was Henderson who effected the synthesis. After 1911 the Shaw of the newspapers, though still fantastic and often absurdly fabulous, got pulled together into a single character. I became an individual where I had not even been a species: I had only been uncollected odds and ends. Henderson collected me, and thereby advanced my standing materially.

What Professor Henderson may have started to do, Mr Bentley has continued doing with infinitely greater success. As no one (including Mr. Shaw) has managed to do before him, Mr. Bentley has succeeded in collecting all the various Shaws and pulling them together into a single character. Perhaps he has oversimplified. Perhaps he has been too arbitrary in denying Mr. Shaw most of his seeming inconsistencies and pointing out what has always been radiantly consistent about his rebel's work. Even so, all of us (including Mr. Shaw) stand in Mr. Bentley's debt.

His "Bernard Shaw" is not a biography. For Shavian anecdotes; for Mr. Shaw's quips and his clowning; for his love letters, his postcards, and his pyrotechnics as a correspondent; for his play-acting and his posturing; for his habits and his triumphs; for the assembled facts of his multiple lives and a picture of the man who has lived rather than written, we must look elsewhere. Above all, to Hesketh Pearson, whose "G.B.S.—A Full Length Portrait" continues to be the sprightliest and most rewarding likeness of Shaw to have found its way into print. Yes, and even to Professor Henderson, whose previously mentioned "Bernard Shaw—Playboy and Prophet" remains invaluable in spite of all Mr. Henderson's successful efforts to make it intolerable.

Mr. Bentley's volume is a serious critical study. Indeed, it is so unflaggingly cerebral that it drove a colleague of mine, a most knowing but human fellow, to confess that it gave

*BERNARD SHAW. By Eric Bentley. New York: New Directions. 1948. 242 pp. $2.

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CHERYL CRAWFORD presents A NEW MUSICAL
BRIGADOON
Book and Lyrics by ALAN JAY LERNER • Music by FREDERICK LOEWE
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LEE SULLIVAN • GEORGE KEANE
WILLIAM HANSEN • ALBERT RUIZ
Dances by AGNES de MILLE • Staged by ROBERT LEWIS
Scenery by OLIVER SMITH • Costumes by DAVID FFOLKES
ZIEGFELD Thea. 6th Ave & 54th St, Eves 8:30; Mats Thurs & Sat 2:30

"A SONG-AND-DANDY. Gayer than a Mardi Gras."—WALTER WINCHELL
HIGH BUTTON SHOES
SHUBERT Thea., 44th St. W. of B'way.
Ev'gs. 8:30. Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2:30

KATHARINE CORNELL GODFREY TEARLE
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA
with KENT SMITH
LENORE ULRIC—RALPH CLANTON
Staged by GUTHRIE McCLINTIC
Martin Beck, W. 45. Evs. 8:15. Mat. Wed & Sat

"RICHLY SATISFYING DRAMA"
—Barnes, Her. Trib.
The Winslow Boy
A New Play by TERENCE RATTIGAN
EMPIRE Thea., 40th Street & Broadway
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"I RECOMMEND IT HEARTILY." Wolcott Gibbs, New Yorker
FRED F. FINKLEHOFFE presents
Basil RATHBONE • Wendy HILLER
"The Heiress"
by Ruth and Augustus Goetz
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Production by JED HARRIS
BILTMORE, W. 47 ST. MATS. WED. & SAT.

"Here's A Happy Hit."—Garland, Jl. Amer.

THE Hartmans
in the smash Musical Revue
ANGEL IN THE WINGS
CORONET Thea., W. 49 St. Mats. Wed. & Sat.

"A DIRECT HIT!"—Walter Winchell
PAUL KELLY in
COMMAND DECISION
with
JAY FASSETT
PAUL McGRATH
FULTON, W. 46th St. Evgs. 8:40. Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2:40.

him "the willies." But, though Shavian in the sharpness of its thinking, it is strangely un-Shavian in the lack of gaiety of its spirit. If its tone is polemical, Mr. Bentley's defense is that his subject is our greatest contemporary polemicist.

To Mr. Bentley, Mr. Shaw is one of the world's liveliest and most unsettled problems. To the settling of this problem Mr. Bentley brings his genuine intellectuality, his extensive knowledge of Shaw, his vigorous opinions, and his excellent perceptions. The trivia he leaves to lesser men. He is out after bigger, more elusive game. His concern is not what Shaw thinks but to what end does he think; not what plays he has written but what kind of plays and what sort of an artist we have in Shaw; not the facts of his life but what is the nature and upshot of his career.

Mr. Bentley combats the idea that Shaw's works represent "a chaos of clear opinions." His point—and a point he makes admirably — is that Shaw's "clear opinions" do not seem chaotic if we consider them in their historical context and see the contradictions as a synthesis of different political traditions. "Shaw," says Mr. Bentley, "should always be taken to mean something even if he cannot always be taken to mean simply what he says. He can always be taken seriously; he cannot always be taken literally."

It was Shaw who insisted that his economic studies have played as important a part in the writing of his plays as a knowledge of anatomy does in the works of Michelangelo. Mr. Bentley takes him at his word. After a foreword (not a preface) in which he quotes the verdicts passed on Shaw over the years by critics ranging from Leon Daudet and Winston Churchill to Auden, T. S. Eliot, and Harold Laski, he plunges straight into Shaw's political economy. He next turns to what he calls Shaw's vital economy. Then, and only then, after having placed him in relation to Marx, discussed his Fabianism, analyzed his socialism, cleared him of flirting with fascism, and discussed his attitude toward life, religion, property, medicine, and man, does Mr. Bentley come to Shaw's plays.

Interesting as are his introductory chapters and illuminating as is his rather joyless treatment of Shaw as a dramatist, Mr. Bentley is, I think, at

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Directed by ANTOINETTE PERRY
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MAURICE EVANS
in
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S COMEDY
Man and Superman
ALVIN Thea., 52nd St. W. of B'way. • CI 5-5226
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"A PLAY OF FIRE AND FURY"
—Morehouse, Sun
ROBERT WHITEHEAD & OLIVER REA present
JUDITH ANDERSON • DENNIS KING • FLORENCE REED
in "MEDEA"
Adapted by ROBINSON JEFFERS
Staged by JOHN GIELGUD
ROYALE, 45 St. W. of B'way • Mats., Wed. & Sat.

"A SUPERB DRAMA"
—Atkinson, Times
IRENE M SELZNICK presents
A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
A New Play by
TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
Directed by ELIA KAZAN
BARRYMORE, W. 47 St., Mats. Wed. & Sat.

"Make Way For A New Hit!"—Morehouse, Sun
JOSEPH M. HYMAN presents
Make Mine Manhattan
The Gay New Musical Revue
Staged by
HASSARD SHORT
Sketches & Lyrics by ARNOLD B. HORWITT • Music by RICHARD LEWINE
BROADHURST, W. 44 St., Mats. Wed. & Sat.

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his best—and an excellent best it is—in his final chapter. It is here that he deals with Shaw's failure as both artist and philosopher to convince his audiences.

Mr. Bentley realizes that in his time Shaw has reached a larger number of people than Marx, Darwin, or Freud reached directly. But, though he has won the world's admiration, he has won few converts. "I have produced no permanent impression," Mr. Shaw once said, "because nobody has ever believed me."

Every real reader of Shaw knows that the real joke is that he has always been in earnest. To win attention, however, he had to play the clown, even at the sacrifice of his genuine modesty. It is as this licensed jester that most people have cherished him. They have mistaken the paradox for the purpose, and lost the prophet in the buffoon. This is not only Shaw's tragedy. It is the world's tragedy, too.

Beneath the jester, the propagandist, the economist, and the philosopher, however, there has always been Shaw the artist. Notwithstanding his pretended contempt for the tribe, Shaw has been a superior artist—in spite of himself. That is his ultimate strength. That is the guarantee of his lasting greatness. That is the final paradox of his pardoxical career. As Mr. Bentley puts it, "by not saving the world [Shaw] saved his drama as art, and, therefore, as teaching."

JOHN MASON BROWN.

FICTION

(*Continued from page 12*)

we have merely forgotten with the resulting encyclopedia immersions keeping us busy for days. Extensive homework, an assembly belt for sequence, and a point of view equip the historical novel with some interest. But any reader can quarrel with concept and with trappings. For the record, it comes as a great surprise to me that "My candle burns at both its ends" was an old French ballad beloved by Queen Anne. There must be some mistake somewhere.

However, one cannot but admire Mrs. Barnes's tireless efforts in Richard's behalf. He emerges a truly perfect knight, gleaming in goodness. The fault lies in ourselves that so much sweetness suffocates excitement.

Story Within a Story

THE VEILED FOUNTAIN. By Harry Hervey. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1947. 370 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by NANCY GROBERG CHAIKIN

THE TITLE of this novel suggests something vague and misty and elusive. To say that the book conforms with the character of the title is an understatement. Actually, it is the story of a young composer, Brian Kimberly, a sensitive, highly emotional fellow, whose inner life is turmoil and across whose path comes a woman whom we shall call Vivian Welles, although she is known by several names in the course of the story. Her reputation is fabulous, her love means disaster, and her first meeting with Brian, a completely anonymous one, occurs when she shares a railroad carriage with him as he travels in India. She disappears from the train before Brian can learn her identity, but turns up later in a story which recounts Brian's trip from England to India—his life as a composer, his love for Vivian, and his childhood, peopled by a cold stepfather, an irresponsible mother, and an impresario who directs his career.

Vivian's part in the story consists mainly of a series of appearances and disappearances. Suffice it to say that because of the tragedy which has befallen others who have loved her, she deems it best to avoid any permanent entanglement with Brian, and when, because of her, he is blinded by a gun shot, turns up in time to give him, anonymously, the cornea of one of her eyes. The last scene reveals that the impresario has secretly booked reservations for them in the same railroad carriage and that now, after the success of his first symphony and the restoration of his sight, Brian will be reunited with Vivian on a more permanent basis. This last trick, incidentally, is the sort of thing a twinkling-eyed movie "fixer" is likely to pull, and it doesn't do much for a book which, in its most encouraging moments, seemed rather sharp.

But the whole thing is terribly vague, and downright confusing. Mr. Hervey, who is given to long, lacy passages, has a field day with India and his hero's mind and leaves the reader in a state of complete exhaustion born of groping toward feasible conclusions, of being slapped back and forth between good and bad writing, and of trying to figure out just what has been going on and what any character in the story really *thinks* has been going on.

What Mr. Hervey has done here is to get himself hopelessly entangled in a combination of vague physical events and vague intellectual ones, and the combination is fatal. There are moments when the conversation, the intellectualization, the self-dramatization, the almost nauseous introspection, become farcical. As it is, the circumstances of Vivian's disappearances and identities, Brian's mental collapses and artistic spurts, and the doing of fate and the impresario are just too much to take seriously.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

SEA CAPTAINS IN LITERATURE

H. J. Gilchrist, of Cleveland, asks you to identify these famous sea captains in fiction. Allowing five points if you can name either the captain or his ship, and another five for the author who created him, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 27.

1. This mysterious captain explored the depths of all the oceans in his own submarine.
2. Old Thunder was his nickname, and he had but one leg, but the crew of his whaling ship jumped to obey his orders.
3. He sailed from Thessaly to Colchis, long ago, to bring back a cargo of glittering wool.
4. This retired sea captain lived with two old shipmates in such a clutter that he tied his sea boots together so that he might find both at once.
5. Hired by the finders of a chart locating hidden treasure, this captain piloted his ship to the island where the pirate Flint had buried his gold.
6. Unwillingly at first, though later he found it hard to part from her, this captain conveyed an arrogant lady on his fighting frigate from Panama to England.
7. Separated by her family from his beloved, this young captain in the English navy won her years later on a visit to the fashionable resort of Bath.
8. This captain from Maine was nicknamed for a quality which did not keep him from prompt action in an emergency: he recaptured an American brig, during the war of 1812, after she had been seized by privateers.
9. Captain of a fishing schooner, he rescued a spoiled lad who had fallen overboard from an ocean liner and reformed him.
10. A cannon broke loose from its moorings on this captain's ship, a man-of-war disguised as a corvet, and only a few hours later he fought his last fight off the reef of Minquiers.

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Ideas. *Number 51 of the 102 basic ideas of Western Civilization is MAN, according to the index to 432 great books recently completed by a group in Chicago. That the idea of man is a sweeping one is indicated by the three books reviewed here. They also suggest that man tends to become what he thinks he is, or, conversely, thinks of himself in terms of what he is becoming. In an era of economic expansion he was "Economic Man"; in a more recent period of consolidation and introspection he became the Freudian "Psychological Man." To Cord Meyer, Jr., author of "Peace or Anarchy," he should become "World Man"; the Catholic convert Giovanni Papini would like to see him "Believing Man." The books under review may give us some further glimpses of the direction in which man is currently moving.*

End of Psychological Man Proclaimed

MAN FOR HIMSELF. By Erich Fromm. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1947. 254 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ASHER BRYNES

ABOUT a decade ago we were startled by an announcement of "The End of Economic Man." However, the abstraction that man is an economic creature had been dead for a generation, at least, before the event was announced. At that time the "psychological man" of Sigmund Freud had already displaced him. Hitler was being analyzed chiefly as a deranged rather than a greedy man, while Mussolini, who rose to power before this latest intellectual fashion gained momentum, was cursed with a variety of technical words signifying exhibitionism. The war itself, to a future historian, will probably seem most characteristic in the light of the efforts vigorously (and in the upshot ridiculously) made by both sides to wage "psychological warfare."

In a previous book which was quite the best of its kind, "Escape from Freedom," Dr. Fromm subjected Nazi behavior to psychoanalysis. He found that the device of the Nazis was to promise and apparently deliver freedom from many things. Freedom from want? Every German was furnished with a job. Freedom from fear? Every German was furnished with a newspaper showing others were more afraid. Freedom to do anything on his own? Ah, that was another story; the denial of that was what other freedoms cost.

Erich Fromm: "As a psychoanalyst [I say] problems of ethics cannot be omitted from the study of personality."

Today Dr. Fromm announces the end of psychological man, which is an exceedingly bold thing to do because this monster is still alive. He does so for the best of reasons:

> My experience as a practising psychoanalyst has confirmed my conviction that problems of ethics cannot be omitted from the study of personality, either theoretically or therapeutically. The value judgments we make determine our actions, and upon their validity rests our mental health and happiness.

The result is a fascinating volume, everywhere of the highest interest for what it says and finally, despite certain shortcomings, magnificent in implications, a new trend in the study of man makes its first appearance in these pages.

The disharmony of man's existence —man the tool-user and builder but, unlike the animals, without a closed circle of instinctual drives to make his life complete and hence easily satisfactory—generates "an imperative drive to restore a unity between himself and the rest of nature." Consequently everyone either takes from his social environment or develops for himself systems or "frames of orientation and devotion" which not only indicate *where* he stands and *what* he ought to do but also show him *how* he ought to act to be a human person, since he cannot live by bread (or by scriptures) alone.

Dr. Fromm completes this general statement with four detailed descriptions of typical orientations which are remarkably lifelike portraits. His touch is as sure as that of a great novelist. He knows what he is talking about, for they are the non-productive types which have come to him for help and he, presumably, has doctored them. The productive (or creative) orientation is, *per contra*, not identified at all and the reader cannot help feeling that Dr. Fromm has had a merely theoretical and not "therapeutic" experience of it. This is quite logical: healthy people need no cure; and it is silly to expect a repairman to know how a complete automobile is manufactured, or even any of the parts that go into it. Nevertheless the omission is a flaw from which certain consequences follow.

Dr. Fromm divides the rules by which we live, roughly, into two sorts: universal ethics or "norms of conduct the aim of which is the growth and unfolding of man," and socially immanent ethics or "those norms which are prohibitions and commands necessary for the functioning and survival of society." The first have a direct, the second an indirect relationship to the well-being of the individual. Both are taught side by side here: "the ethics of the New Testament and the norms that are effective for the conduct of a successful business." The latter, continues Dr. Fromm, conflict with or block the universal norms which are essential to the fullest development of individuals, but "as long as a certain type of social organization is historically indispensable the individual has no choice."

We may be wrongheaded, but if there is anything unique about the specific type of social organization flourishing here, it is that we have never accepted anything as historically indispensable and decided we

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 723)

OSBERT SITWELL:
GREAT MORNING

Almost as if I were captive to a
Roman general, or a criminal in the
stocks, I was thus made to parade
publicly my humiliation as I sat,
at the age of twenty-one, at a
kitchen table placed on the grass,
practising how to make pothooks.

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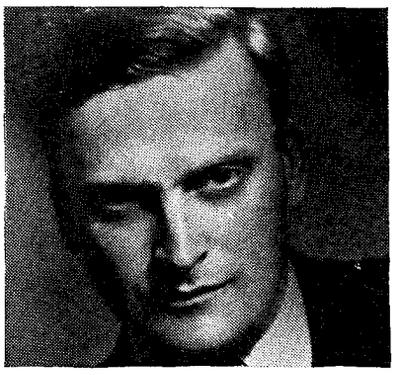

My Current Reading

Yehudi Menuhin, world-famed violinist and one-time boy prodigy, has submitted the following list of his favorite reading:

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, *by Feodor Mikhailovich Dostoievsky*

SPIRIT OF MAN: AN ANTHOLOGY IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH FROM THE PHILOSOPHERS AND POETS MADE IN 1915, *compiled by Robert Bridges (Longmans, England,* 1940)

MADAME BOVARY, *by Gustave Flaubert*

OUR MUTUAL FRIEND, *by Charles Dickens*

THE HAPPY HYPOCRITE, *by Max Beerbohm (1897)*

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS, *by Jonathan Swift*

THE TURN OF THE SCREW, *by Henry James*

WESTOELICHER DIWAN, *by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

DON QUIXOTE, *by Miguel de Cervantes*

SONG OF THE LARK, *by Willa Cather (Houghton Mifflin)*

had no choice; this is a type of hopelessness, common enough abroad, from which we have been absolutely free.

It follows, therefore, that Dr. Fromm's specific prescription does not fit. If we were in the compulsive social environment he describes we should expect him to counsel us to revolt. He does say that rebellion, for which he has a new name, "humanistic conscience," is natural, life-long, and creative. Yet the procedure he advises is that we should "look inward" and stop being indifferent to ourselves, and by such inward looking he appears to mean leisure-time activities of a very innocent sort: religion perhaps, or hobbies. This does not fit those who are in a compulsive social environment either.

The middle of the road is doubtless the most prudent part of it on which to drive. But one can get stuck there, too, for to stay in the middle you have to keep your eyes on both sides, which is apt to distract attention from the condition of the road itself. Dr. Fromm is strongly of the opinion that we need more faith, in a modified Old Testament sense of the word signifying firmness as a character trait: firm faith not *in* something but "as an inner attitude the specific object of which is of secondary importance."

Psychoanalysis doesn't seem to sharpen much the important difference between "rational and irrational" faith.

The Cosmic Fledgling

MAN: A CITIZEN OF THE UNIVERSE. By John O'Hara Cosgrave. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 1948. 144 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by T. V. SMITH

IT OCCURS to everyone at some time how strange it is that man, child as he is of aspiration, should be so much product and projection of his physical aspects. Why can spirit not somehow escape—really escape—from body, humanity from mere human beings? Why indeed cannot the escape *from* be also an escape *into*, so that the higher can conserve while it surmounts the lower, opening up through the process hinterlands of embodied perfection?

This book is but to elaborate, though hardly to exploit, this wonder and perturbation.

As elaboration, the volume is a strange mixture of realism and idealism. Sympathetic with the spirit of science and appreciative of its results, the author calls, like Goethe, for *"mehr licht, mehr licht, mehr licht."* This modern Promethean calls in a mood so uplifting and in a tense so cosmically histrionic that his realism passes into a full-fledged romanticism. His ends, undisclosed, jump the guns on his means, all means as yet discovered; and eventuate who knows who, who knows where. I first wrote in the preceding sentence, "God knows how, God knows where." But what we have here is a mere romanticism, not a positive theology. It is indeed our author's deepening suspicion, as he words it, "that neither Genesis nor Evolution offers sufficient reason for the facts [of man's strange case]. The incidents of birth and death explain nothing; they but occur."

Committed to no dogma, the author out-supernaturalizes supernaturalism and over-naturalizes naturalism. He affects a hope for a man-transcending Man, for a Man-fulfilling humanity. How or why doth not appear in the premises, nor is it clearly spelled out in the conclusion. The technique of the book reminds one of the strategy of those who in behalf of their hope for a supra-national state would jump the guns on nationalism with its hard-won and infinitely precious increments of prowess. And yet this is better than that technique; for it involves no mysticism in any ordinary sense: just undelineated means and undetailed ends.

Fact-filled, however, and fancy-filling, the book plays to the full the ancient role of philosophy: it is born of wonder, it is informed of fancy, it is fecund of hope. Man who has become so much from so little, and that without prevision or implementation on his own part, may yet become what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard—what indeed has not yet entered into the heart of any one. Each man is entitled to at least one such articulation, lest the dreamer die without his dream's projection. John O'Hara Cosgrave lived repletely, dreamed mightily, and left this as his last will and testament. Thus spake Zarathustra.

The Closed Garden

By Louis Kent

WHO THREW the stone
and broke the light
in the high lamp that shone
over the wall, on the hair, on the brow
of the tall lady who walked
door to wall, wall to door,
down the long path back and forth
like a shadow
in the closed garden?

Or was it a bird,
a great bird brushed the lamp
with a heavy bend of wing,
flying so low, so low,
among the old dark houses
to find this old dark house,
this garden closed in a wall,
the lady walking
back and forth?

The door was locked
in the morning, the wall unbroken,
when they found the mark of her heel;
in the morning light, when they found,
here by the door, there by the wall,
the clear turn of her heel in the path,
sharp, sharp in the soft ground,
and only the sky
open for flight.

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The West's Testament of Freedom

MAN AND STATE: Modern Political Ideas. Edited by William Ebenstein. New York: Rinehart & Co. 1947. 781 pp. $6.50.

Reviewed by MILTON R. KONVITZ

IT IS doubtful if in the final reckoning historians will make note of the fact that among the very few desirable legacies of fascism and nazism is a very small group of anthologies on freedom. Let us mention this one small favor of Franco, Mussolini, Hitler: the more notable anthologies—"Freedom: Its Meaning," edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen (1940); "We Hold These Truths," edited by Stuart Gerry Brown (1941); "Forever Freedom," edited by Josiah C. Wedgwood and Allan Nevins (a Pelican book, 1940); "Essential Human Rights," edited by William Draper Lewis and John R. Ellington (an issue of the *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1946); "Democracy, Liberty and Property," edited by Francis W. Coker (1942). Now we have "Man and the State," edited by Professor Ebenstein, of Princeton University.

While Ebenstein's book is perhaps the most satisfactory, it is not altogether satisfying; but no anthology can ever give complete satisfaction. The selections are usually short enough to be interesting but are almost never long enough to cover the subject. By their very nature they can serve only as stimulants, leaving the customer excited and frustrated. If every man had his own press, the ideal would be: every man his own anthologist. Until, however, we witness this glorious revolution, I would be willing to delegate my inalienable right to anthologize on freedom to William Ebenstein.

The purpose of the book "is to present the *major ideas* that have animated the political thinking of the Western world in the modern age." This is accomplished by 117 selections, distributed among eighteen chapters.

In essence the central theme of the book is freedom. There was a time when this subject could have been

(and was) treated apart from such subjects as private property, communism, socialism, fascism, planning, nationalism, war, and international law. The logic of events of the last several decades has made a consideration of freedom in isolation from other political and social ideas impossible. Professor Ebenstein's book reflects a mind keenly interested in cross-currents of events and of theories; his book is about freedom in One World.

The editor of "Man and State" did not limit himself to the obvious documents (the Declaration of Independence, Mill's "On Liberty," Locke's "Two Treatises of Government"); he ventured to explore some generally untrodden ways and byways. One's heart is gladdened by discovering in the book things by Herbert Read, Jacob Klatzkin, a letter by Frederick Pollock to Mr. Justice Holmes, Morris R. Cohen's "Why I Am Not a Communist," the opinion of the Federal district court (and *not* of the Supreme Court) in the case of *Children's Hospital v. Adkins,* passages from the TNEC and Kilgore committee reports, selections from the writings of Leonard Woolf, Harold Nicolson, D. W. Brogan, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Albert Guerard. Hegel, Kant, Jefferson, John Dewey, FDR, Nietzsche, Hobbes, Hitler, and Lincoln are, of course, also here; but it is obvious that the editor made his selection on the basis of brevity and incisiveness rather than authorship—he was not prejudiced against an author because he was famous or obscure but made his choice with an even hand on the basis of quality. The editor's introductory notes place the selections in an historical and theoretical context and are quite adequate.

While the book will not convert one to anthologies if one is predisposed to be irritated by them, I venture to suggest this anthology reduces the irritation almost to the vanishing point.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Captain Nemo of the *Nautilus,* in "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," by Jules Verne. 2. Captain Ahab of the *Pequod,* in "Moby Dick," by Herman Melville. 3. Jason of the *Argo,* in Greek Mythology. 4. Captain Eri Hedge of the *Hannah M.,* in "Cap'n Eri," by Joseph Lincoln. 5. Captain Smollett of the *Hispaniola,* in "Treasure Island," by Robert Louis Stevenson. 6. Captain Horatio Hornblower of the *Lydia,* in "Beat to Quarters," by C. S. Forester. 7. Captain Frederick Wentworth of the *Laconia,* in "Persuasion," by Jane Austen. 8. Captain Daniel Marvin of the *True Hearted Yankee,* in "Captain Caution," by Kenneth Roberts. 9. Captain Disko Troop of the *We're Here,* in "Captains Courageous," by Rudyard Kipling. 10. Captain Boisberthelot of the *Claymore,* in "Ninety-Three," by Victor Hugo.

CORRECTION

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Owing to a printer's error, two lines of Henry Seidel Canby's "The Return of Henry James" in* SRL *of January 24 were transposed. In order to rectify this regrettable error we reprint below the last two paragraphs of the article in which Dr. Canby was discussing the reasons for Henry James's recent return to popularity.*

What is already happening is that from these thirty-five neglected volumes of his works, a few classics are ready to be tried and tested and seem likely to achieve permanence in literature. I have my own list ready, but do not feel confidence enough in it yet to set it down here. And a classic, with not very many exceptions, is a book that is well and continuously, rather than widely and eagerly, read.

Other questions may await their answers. For example, how American was Henry James has not yet been answered. As the general dispraise of the Anglo-Saxon nineteenth century begins to give place to a feeling that it was in many respects more satisfactory in quality and nobler in will than our own, there will be more consideration of its spokesmen, and more interest in the novelists who saw in three dimensions the characters who best illustrated the time. Of these James belonged among the great. H. J. would have blushed and stammered if the term "spokesman" had been applied to him. "Not a spokesman, my dear fellow, but in his small but earnest way, so qualified and unscientific as it was, he may have earned, as his line of exit from the scene, the credit for drawing drowned consciousness from the depths of being, as Hotspur did honor." Even though artist more than interpreter, social historians will need him for any study of Western culture at its most confident moment. And it may be prophesied that his portraits will prove to have a psychological realism akin to the physical realism in the daguerreotypes of the same century.

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

SCHUSS ONE OF THOSE THINGS

UP AT Tuckerman's Ravine oldtimers were betting it would last until the Fourth of July. Soon the valley would be packing it in eighty feet deep. Pinkham Notch already had a fifty-inch base. All over the East, the teletype was crackling with reports of the heaviest snow in years. Ski trains were canceling their schedules for lack of business. The customers were hitting the trail in their own backyard.

The news failed to please street cleaners, Long Island R.R. commuters, and 23,000 New Yorkers who got stuck with $15 tickets because their cars were stalled in drifts. But the skiers, at least, were ecstatic. You could hear them shouting "Track!" halfway to the Rockies.

Sixteen years ago a snowfall in midwinter wouldn't have raised any more noise than Hannes Schneider skimming over eight inches of fine white powder. Today an estimated three to five million Americans have taken to the boards. From zero in 1931, U. S. skiing soared to an $800 million industry in 1947.

You can blame it on Hitler. The Anschluss pushed a whole crop of capable ski instructors right out of Austria. Hannes Schneider, the father of American skiing, was actually sprung from the Reich as recently as 1939 by Harvey Gibson, head of the Manufacturers Trust Co. As a young lad Schneider learned on barrel staves in the Austrian village of Steuben-am-Arlberg, and the basic snowplow method used all over the U. S. today is known as the Arlberg technique. The French, as you might suspect, do it differently. At Luchon and Font Romeu in the Pyrenees, Megeve and Chamonix in the Alps, French instructors teach the parallel ski technique whose proponent is Emile Allais.

All it takes to start a ski resort is a hill, intermittent snow, and a ski tow. All it takes for a ski tow is a second-hand Ford engine and a thousand feet of rope, but nowadays eligible communities are floating bond issues to finance such unheard-of contraptions as J-bars, Constamm T-bars, and chair lifts. North Conway, N. H., has installed the world's only skimobile that whisks you and the skis back up the hill in your own little car.

A skier's ski resort is hearty, healthy, and inexpensive. Rates start at $5 a day for a room with a bunk, two hot meals, and a midday sandwich on the trail included. Some inns, like the New England at Intervale, N. H., send out a hot meal on a chow wagon. A lot of small, new places have been opened by veterans. There is one high on an Alp in France run by an American who parachuted into a near-by town to organize the maquis, and to this day is known only by his underground name. Jack and Peg Kenney, old Navy people, man Tamarack Lodge at Franconia, N. H., and get $39.50 a week, food included. An Air Force navigator named Ford and a blind artillery major named Hyde have a fine inn, also in New Hampshire, called Copper Cannon, although I should think they would have named it something else. Cost: $6.50 a day.

The *dernier cri* in ski resorts is Sun Valley, Idaho, run by the Union Pacific R.R. more as an object lesson in good living than as a paying proposition. Sun Valley has eight ski tows, nobody-knows-how-many trails, an open-air, hot-water swimming pool, three skating rinks, and always a house full of celebrities. There is all manner of lodgment from a suite with private sundeck at $46 per day, to a bunk in one of the chalets at $2, $2.50 if you want running water.

Almost any time this year you might have run adrift of people the likes of Ingrid Bergman, Walter Pidgeon, or Hedy Lamarr, and Esther Williams is due any minute to make a picture on location. "For Whom the Bell Tolls" was written at S. V., and we have it on good authority that Hemingway calls the place "home." He's there now so deep in writing another novel he forgot to keep a skeet-shooting date with Gary Cooper.

No matter your Hooper or the rate you pay, anybody can dance in the Duchin Room, drink beer at The Ram, eat steaming stew at the Roundhouse, toss off hot spiced gluhwein, and munch an (Idaho) baked potato in the hot potato huts on the hills. Every Christmas Eve skiers go swooping down the neighboring slopes carrying lighted torches, a remarkable sight, they say. Things went awry this year when at torch time Sun Valley was still having a green Christmas. Up went an airplane to drop ice pellets. Still no snow. Six hours later it came.

God and the ice pellets were a little late. HORACE SUTTON.

Olympic Coach

SKI WITH SVERRE. By Sverre Engen and Montgomery Atwater. New York: New Directions. 1947. 143 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by FRANK HARPER

THE title is right. Reading this excellent little book, you are really skiing with Sverre, one of the three famous Engen brothers. Alf, coach of

—New Hampshire Information Service.

Skiers were crowding the warming hut at Intervale, N. H., but "the news failed to please street cleaners, Long Island R.R. commuters, and 23,000 New Yorkers. . . ."

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Report From Our Man In The Alps

ST. MORITZ.

WITH the Winter Olympic Games just starting here, this Swiss town is jammed with besweatered athletes training for the events, and a fashionable crowd of all nationalities come partly to watch them, but mostly to look at each other.

This summer a new downhill trail was built especially for the Olympic ski race. There's a soft rolling "schuss" at the top, then terrifying, plunging "steilhangs," like a series of waterfalls, and a fast, bumpy track through forest to the finish in the valley bottom. Already there have been many injuries in training. Pierre Jalbert, Canada's best man, broke a leg, and two of the leading Swiss, Edi Rominger and Valaer, are in hospital. Our American losses have been severe among the jumpers, with Art Devlin and Walt Bietila both incapacitated. However, Gordon Wren is jumping better than he ever has in his life, and for a blond boy he has a good dark-horse chance to bear comparison with the great Scandinavians.

In downhill and slalom it is agreed among the experts that the battle will be fought out among France's formidable team, led by James Couttet; Switzerland's little champion, Karl Molitor of Wengen, a great new Austrian find; Edi Mall, nephew of Hannes Schneider; and Italy's magnificent veteran, Zeno Colo, who won an important warm-up race on the Lauberhorn at Wengen last week-end. In a second category, *spitzenklasse* but not *extraklasse*, as they say here, will be our American lads. Jack Reddish of Alta and Colin Stewart of Hanover, have shown the most power in trials, but they will have their hands full with the Norwegians, the Swedes, who have a fine slalomer in Olle Dalman; the rest of the Swiss, Italians, Austrians, and French, and the Czech star, Anton Sponar.

Everyone had thought that the girls' racing would be a walkaway for Georgette Miller-Thiolière, who is still running for France, although she acquired an American husband at Sun Valley last winter. In last week's pre-Olympic race at Grindlewald she had her hands very full outpointing two girls who are big in power if small in stature, Celina Seghi of Italy and May Nillsen of Sweden. Our fifteen-year-old star, Andrea Mead of Pico Peak, Vt., did wonderfully, taking a fourth in giant slalom, while Becky Cremer, also a Vermonter, did well in downhill. One of the best European girls, Trude Beiser of Austria, did not get to the Grindlewald race. Nor did the two strong Czech girls, whose Russian names I cannot possibly spell.

As a skier, I look down my nose at the other branches of winter sport, but their exponents are here—the elephantine bobsledders, eating desperately to get even heavier before they race; the pretty twinkletoes in pastel tights, each with a formidable mamma busy intimidating the judges; the speedskaters, in little wool hats like the devil in Faust, including a contingent from Korea; and, from the USA, *two* different hockey teams, each of which claims that the other is a bunch of ringers. Personally, I feel most sympathetic with the aged gentlemen in galoshes with brooms who spin their curling stones down the ice. They are very relaxed and philosophical, knowing well that all this competition is but the folly of hot youth

JAMES LAUGHLIN.

the Olympic cross-country and jumping teams now starting at St. Moritz, won every national title at least once, and Sverre is one of the finest instructors, teaching the white art of skiing at Alta, Utah.

"I have taken many people touring who couldn't even snowplow," Sverre writes, and that's one of the reasons why I like this book. He is not the man who keeps his pupils too long on easy training slopes; he doesn't like skiing in the beaten tracks nor using the snow tows all the time. Instead, he takes his pupils climbing into the mountains where the snow is deepest. He is one of the few who really knows what skiing is. Contrary to his opinion, there are not so many instructors in this country who are both skilled and conscientious.

With Mr. Atwater's help, the book is clearly written, avoiding purposedly confusing technicalities. You get Sverre's idea of skiing despite the simplification, and it is obvious the publisher has done a loving job on the book.

There is a special chapter on deep-snow skiing with which I agree—except that the telemark, the easiest swiftest, and most elegant turn in deep snow, isn't even mentioned. Think it over, Sverre. But I cannot agree to the statement that the study of avalanches is not a science. Read Gerald Seligman and Wilhelm Paulcke, Sverre. What you have told in that chapter just isn't enough. The truth is that all slopes of more than twenty-two degrees steepness are dangerous during or shortly after a snowstorm, and most avalanche disasters have been caused by ignorance of this fact.

Nevertheless, "Ski with Sverre" is an enjoyable book that, together with the National Ski Association's "Manual of Ski Mountaineering," is a must for anyone who makes a pretense of having a ski library.

Author of "Night Climb" and "Skiing for the Millions," Frank Harper is currently at work on a novel.

Ski Lore

SWING INTO SKIING. By Arnold Fawcus. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1947. 68 pp. $3.50.

SKIING THE AMERICAS. By John Jay. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 68 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by OTTO LANG

IN THIS book Arnold Fawcus makes an attempt to "short cut" the process of learning how to ski, which is the present-day trend of every progressive ski school in the United States. As the author himself states, his ideas represent a "modification" of the Arlberg technique as advocated by Hannes Schneider (its founder) and some of his disciples in this country. Therefore, it is nothing new or revolutionary, as it is merely a natural evolution that has taken place during the past few years. Whether it is called "drift technique" or "swing technique," or whatever the next best coined name will be, in essence it takes the emphasis away from the once predominantly wide snowplow stance, with an exaggerated shifting of the weight from one ski onto the other in order to turn. The modern trend stresses the "body swing" proper, instead.

The author makes it quite clear in his book that the two skis are to be regarded and operated as one unit, with the weight of the body distributed in equal portions between both skis whenever feasible, rather than to regard the skis as two separate pieces of wood with the weight unevenly distributed upon them.

The book follows very closely the regular and established curriculum of the Arlberg technique, taking the reader through the various steps of

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walking, climbing, straight running, traversing, snowplow, snowplow turn, stem turn, etc. It winds up with the so-called "swing turn," a newly baptized variation of the familiar tempo turn, a christiana at high speed.

Tyler Miooleau's fluent sketches greatly help the author in making some of his points clearer.

A section of the book is devoted to a selection of proper equipment, which I am sure will be helpful to many a novice skier.

* * *

John Jay's "Skiing the Americas" is a veritable encyclopedia of skiing information, covering the territories of North and South America in detail. It is also a Who's Who edition on the skiing clan of the Americas, with familiar names and faces sprouting from every page.

Skiers will derive a good deal of pleasure reading this book, and I am quite sure that many a reader who never has tempted fate by attaching himself to a pair of hickory boards will fall an easy prey to John Jay's delightful and typically dry Yankee humor.

A beginner will find a wealth of practical suggestions in this book, from the elementary purchase of the proper equipment to what to wear after skiing without making a complete ass of himself. It will tell you where to go and how much it might cost you approximately.

The book covers virtually every resort of prominence in the United States, describing its respective lures and shortcomings vividly. The author happens to have explored both North and South America in a criss-cross pattern with his 16-mm camera, using every thinkable means of transportation. Therefore this book will also be of particular interest to the amateur cameraman, as John Jay divulges some of his trade secrets and tricks in this particular field, which has established him firmly as one of the best known and most popular lecturers on the subject of skiing. It is fortunate that the author has succeeded in transposing the spontaneity of his rather unique lecturing style into the written pages of his first book.

With a very fitting tribute and intimate "inside" picture on the training and activities of the celebrated Tenth Mountain Division the book comes to a close with the frightening prediction that by 1960 we might have 15,000,000 skiers in this country.

Director of Sun Valley's ski school and Hollywood producer, Otto Lang is author of two ski books and an AP ski feature now appearing nationally.

NEW EDITIONS

IN HIS new introduction to the Modern Library edition of "Storm" ($1.25) George R. Stewart tells us that his story, "as originally conceived, fell into a familiar enough pattern, that is, the adventures of many unrelated or slightly related people all happening to be affected by the same event." But as he became more and more interested in the working of the forces that make weather what it is, as he studied the careers of storms from birth to death, he came to realize that a storm of sufficient magnitude might serve as the important and exciting protagonist of a fictionalized biography.

So his tale, although labeled a novel, is really the biography of Maria (named by a junior meteorologist and pronounced in the English and American way); the story of how Maria was born and grew and traveled, and what she did to man and his works, and the land itself, in the course of her violent journeying.

Radiating from the Forecasting Division of a United States Weather Bureau in California, this story is chiefly concerned with Maria's impact upon a highly mechanized civilization; with man's effort to keep all his little gadgets working in the face of a vast, hostile, elemental force. Roads must be kept open, even over the Donner Pass (and with the road crews Mr. Stewart is at his very best); power lines must function, and loads be adjusted to meet local disasters; telephone and telegraph must not fail; trains must go through, while planes must battle or avoid the storm; flood controls must be manipulated; automobilists must be saved, whenever possible, from the results of their ignorance and folly; and the Weather Bureau, of course, must do its best to see that Maria does not make a joke of its forecasts.

Mr. Stewart has managed his complex web of events with skill and precise knowledge, while maintaining a narrative interest that is steady if not cumulative. His meteorological information is impressive and fascinating, and it is communicated easily. His view is broad, his spirit philosophical. All but a few of the human characters are merely names and shadows, but Maria and her fateful actions are what matter. "Storm" is an unusual book; it is also, in the words of an older generation, one that may be read with pleasure and profit.

Much of the action of "Storm" takes place in the Sierra region where the Donner party met its fate, and some years ago Mr. Stewart himself wrote a version of the famous tragedy. Now George H. Hinkle and Bliss McGlashan Hinkle have given us a photolithographic reproduction of the second (1881) edition of C. F. McGlashan's popular "History of the Donner Party" (Stanford University Press, $3.50). This is a great item of Americana, and I quarrel less than do the editors with the author's sentimental style; it suits subject and period. McGlashan's narrative was based upon his own on-the-spot research and the copious testimony of those who had lived to tell their tale. No matter how often one reads this story, its horror never fades; indeed, despite the elements of fortitude and heroism, the abiding horror very nearly precludes the catharsis which true tragedy is generally supposed to afford.

The Modern Libary edition of "The Egoist" ($1.25) has made me realize that I have been misquoting Meredith's brilliant and now neglected novel for some thirty years. I had thought that when Sir Willoughby met Letitia, after his world tour, "He took her in his arms, looked into her eyes. saw there the man he loved, clasped him fondly, and let her go." What Meredith wrote may be discovered on p. 27 of the M. L. edition. But I still prefer my version.

William Lindsay Gresham's sex-charged story of the rise and fall of an ambitious young carnival magician as told in "Nightmare Alley" (Sun Dial Press, $1) is wistfully sensational, but it contains some writing which indicates that its author is capable of fiction more worthy of serious consideration than is the present exhibit. . . . Ludwig Lewisohn's "The Case of Mr. Crump," which appears somewhat abridged as "The Tyranny of Sex" (Penguin, 25¢), is also sex-charged, but on a different literary level than that of "Nightmare Alley." One of the most terrible novels of marriage ever written, "Crump" will probably live as a masterpiece in its field. . . . Note another important Modern Library newcomer: Sinclair Lewis's "Dodsworth" ($1.25).

BEN RAY REDMAN.

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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
DISC ETHNIC SERIES: CUBAN CULT MUSIC, FOLK MUSIC OF THE CENTRAL EAST, HAITI, ETHIOPIA, AMERICAN INDIAN SONGS AND DANCES. Recorded "on location" by Charles Hofmann, Harold Courlander, and others. Explanatory booklets, illustrated. Disc 131, 132, 141, 142, 161.	Recording done on portable equipment. Mostly of fairly good quality, though range restricted. Main trouble is with performers, who lack mike technique! Even so, some records show remarkably effective recording.	B+ average	A remarkable documentary series of "on location" excerpts. Interesting, scholarly booklets, splendid photos. A "one world" background — these albums indicate indirectly the similarities in all primitive music. Much stuff never before available. For uninitiated listening try Central East, Haiti, Ethiopia albums. Main criticism: excerpts exasperatingly short; better fewer, longer.
"MOUNTAIN FROLIC." Square dances and hoedowns from Southern mountains. Assorted artists. Ed. Alan Lomax. Brunswick B 1025 (4 10") (*Recorded 1920's*)	Considering the age of these—several date from 1927—the quality is excellent. Few highs, but surprisingly little distortion, great naturalness. (Some blasting, etc. due to singers' mike deficiencies.) New pressings, fairly quiet, do much to add life. High level recording.	A—	A new series edited by Alan Lomax, reissues from masters of the 1920's. This is "real" Am. folk music, uncommercialized. Good, too (see below), and entertaining. "Frolic" a paraphrase (booklet) of century-old mountain frolic, illustrated by records. "Story" a ballad collection. Words & music in booklets.
"LISTEN TO OUR STORY"—Panorama of American ballads. Assorted artists. Ed. Alan Lomax. Brunswick B 1024 (4 10") (*Recorded 1920's*)			
SONGS TO GROW ON—LULLABIES AND ROUNDS. Peter Seeger and others. Disc 601 (2 10")	Lullaby effect: Seeger sings very low, close to mike. Good in the main, but some blasting inevitably. (He's no Sinatra!)	A to B+	Another in series of folk music children's albums. This one is leisurely, unaffected, musical. Three sides Seeger, one of trad. rounds, three voices.

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ABOVE you will see a considerable group of albums all of which have the interesting and debatable stamp of authenticity upon them.

Debatable, because homespunedness, native unsophistication, is no necessary guarantee of quality, as some would believe. Nor is the touch of the concert hall, the high brow necessarily fatal. No doubt about it, the golden lure has ruined many a fine native art; no question that much of the current popular craze for folk music is a debasement of music that was better before it became popular. But there is no necessity! Some of the finest music, composed art music, is based on folk songs and most assuredly "distorts" their simple, primitive values. The best of the age-old, crystallized English tunes are known to us in composed settings, in the peerless work of Cecil Sharp (his piano arrangements are the work of genius) and the choral settings of Vaughan-Williams and Gustav Holst.

Not that I want to disparage attempts to resurrect or to preserve our uncontaminated folk music—nothing of the sort. The Library of Congress work, under the Lomaxes, is vitally important musically, and historically in recording values which unlike the comparable values of composed music cannot be preserved in print. But the esthetic value of such music is a subtle matter (it is in any music) that depends not on its superficialities, not even on what is so vaguely called its "sincerity." The question of style—of nasal, raucous singing, for instance, versus "trained" voice singing (but every good folk singer is "trained" in his own art)—is, like all questions of style, to be judged solely as to its effectiveness in giving expression to the music involved. Of course we have our likes and dislikes as to style, but style (as this column has said in other connections) is no arbiter of value. There is plenty of value in the music above.

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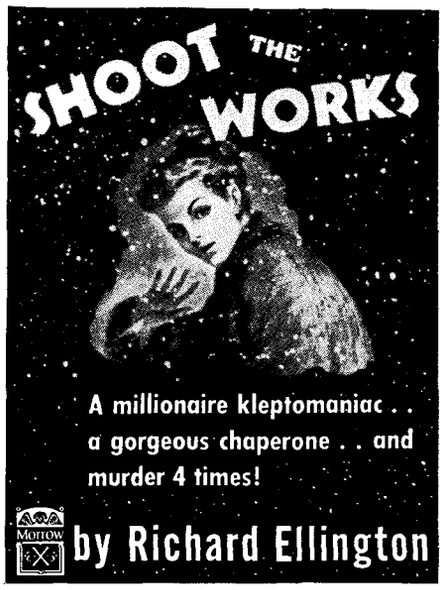

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MANHATTAN AFTER THE GREAT SNOW

I SAW Mr. Pickwick sitting on a sled,
Planted in wonder on the thoroughfare.
Around him darted children like dragon flies
In a snowy meadow of tranquil air.

I saw old ladies sail majestically,
Comfortable of motion, on the feathered ground,
At the enchanted scene I stared amazed.
Not a motor roared, not a wheel turned round.

Hurly-burly hushed by a fairy wand,
Automobiles changed into sugared pies . . .
And still Mr. Pickwick, magically transformed,
Sat on a sled with wondering eyes.

FLORENCE RIPLEY MASTIN.

* * *

Earl Walbridge writes me:

> Meredith Nicholson died in Indianapolis December 21, reminding me of his trio of mystery stories, "The House of a Thousand Candles" (1905), "Rosalind at Red Gate" (1907), and "The Siege of the Seven Suitors" (1910), all as fresh, charming, and inventive in quality as the day they were published. The AP dispatch stated that "The House of a Thousand Candles" was suggested by a moonlight view of a rambling old house near Lake Maxinkuckee, at Culver, Ind., which explains a demure reference at the beginning of the romance: "John Glenarm, the grandson of John Marshall Glenarm, the eccentric millionaire who died suddenly in Vermont last summer, arrived on the *Maxinkuckee* from Naples yesterday."
>
> Nicholson had a great liking for good light verse (besides writing some himself), as shown by the chapter headings of "Rosalind at Red Gate." The first pantoum I ever met leads off Chapter IX, Edith Thomas's:
>
> The night is still, the moon looks kind,
> The dew hangs jewels in the heath,
> An ivy climbs across thy blind
> And throws a light and misty wreath.
>
> The dew hangs jewels in the heath,
> Buds bloom for which the bee has pined. . . .
>
> The action of "The Siege of the Seven Suitors," this one in Westchester County, not Indiana, gets started in a Browning tea-room, the Asolando, where the waitresses greet patrons with a tag of verse ("Soup of the evening, Beautiful soup," if they can't think of anything more original). The frontispiece was painted by Coles Phillips, and was marked by his celebrated sheen, while the other illustrations were done in pen and ink by Reginald Birch. Incidentally, a dramatization of "The House of a Thousand Candles" pulled George Middleton well out of a financial hole—see his recent autobiography, "These things Are Mine." He also dramatized "Rosalind at Red Gate," but never saw it on the stage—nor did I. The movies should remake it; it has some wonderful chases.
>
> Footnote to Mrs. Colum's "Life and the Dream": I was introduced to Lady Gregory when she visited the University of Vermont thirty-odd years ago. I mentioned her play "The Canavans," and she remarked, "That was Mr. Yeats's favorite."

* * *

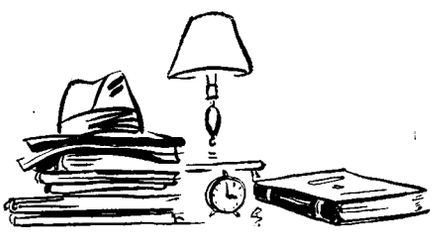
"FOOTPRINTS THAT PERHAPS ANOTHER—"

I can't get out of my mind a remark in a poem by a modern young poet in which he speaks of a "fierce lark" carrying "against all odds her clutch of eggs." Now a "clutch" is a nest of eggs or a brood of chicks. It may be possible in nature for a lark to carry a nestful, though I should doubt if she could carry it far. I suppose it *would* make her fierce. All mothers are fierce with respect to their nestlings. Anyway, the image has revolutionized all my thoughts about larks! . . . Earle Walbridge asks me, "What is an eidillion? I can't find it in any dictionary. Some complication of verses, I believe. Barnabe Barnes wrote one. More about him later." . . . Speaking of "B's, I wish Barney Baruch were not as old as he is. I would nominate him for President! I don't like any of the candidates so far. . . . In a recent *Survey Graphic*, Harry Hansen, in speaking of individual freedom in writing, quotes Julian Huxley to good effect. Huxley declares—

> . . . the primacy of the individual over the state, far from implying selfish development or development at the expense of others, has as its corollaries tolerance, the duty not to use others only or primarily as means, and the equality of all individuals in respect of certain important opportunities.

Yet Harry has as wise a thing to say himself. It is this:

> But he [the writer] must have some sense of social responsibility, for he now runs the risk of suppression from two extremes, the religious, which operates through boycotts, and the totalitarian, which would make him the creature of a political and economic program.



I believe "Forever Amber" has now been revised for the screen to underline Amber's sinfulness. At this point I should welcome a remark from the spirit world by the late William Congreve! . . . *Ssh!* . . . John Morley we know; Christopher Morley and Frank Morley we know; but who knows much about Henry Morley, among whose books and papers, published by Routledge in the early Nineties, are "Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair," of which I am lucky enough to possess a fourth edition. This Morley was the son of a Sussex apothecary and went to school, queerly enough, on the Rhine. First he wrote on medical subjects, and then helped Dickens edit "Household Words." A teacher and speaker with a great memory, his whiskers were as wonderful as Edward Lear's, and he edited an enormous amount. I have some volumes of Morley's Universal Library, but Cassell's National Library ran to two hundred and fourteen volumes! The book on Bartholomew Fair was first published in 1857 and Morley died in 1894. I like one of his titles (a medical treatise) from 1849, "How to Make Home Unhealthy"! That was the book that first interested Dickens too. . . . In the year 1790 they showed at Bartholomew Fair a Ram with Six Legs, and also "Miss Morgan the Celebrated Windsor Fairy, known in London and Windsor by the addition of Lady Morgan. . . . Her form affords a pleasing surprise and her admirable symmetry engages attention. . . . Their Majesties . . . were pleased to pronounce her the finest Display of Human Nature in miniature they ever saw." Admittance to "Ladies and Gentlemen" was "One Shilling, Children, Half Price." . . . I have lately seen the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company's "Iolanthe"; but the Queen of the Fairies in that was not miniature. . . . Martyn Green as the Lord Chancellor I shall never forget. How admirable his voice, how delicate his dancing! If one could only be like that! Or like Private Willis of the Grenadier Guards, with his red wings!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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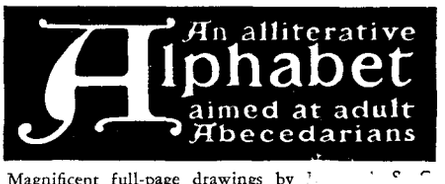

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